

THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST
NOT AN
ECCLESIASTICISM.

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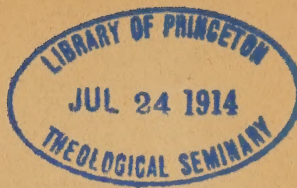
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The church of Christ not an
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A LETTER OF REMONSTRANCE
TO A MEMBER OF
THE *SOI-DISANT* NEW CHURCH



THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST

NOT AN ECCLESIASTICISM

BY

HENRY JAMES

SECOND EDITION

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ADVERTISEMENT

THE following Tract takes the form of "A Letter of Remonstrance to a Member of the *soi-disant* new church," chiefly, because the controversial form of discussion is always the most favorable to the evolution of truth,—truth being essentially combative: and incidentally, because this sect, though so inconsiderable in point of numbers, undoubtedly obscures and degrades symbols of the most universal pith and sacredness in public estimation, by being allowed to go on unrebuked in the pertinacious identification of itself with the "New Jerusalem," or new church of the Apocalypse. Respect also for the memory of a great and honest name sadly misrepresented, enters, appreciably, into the writer's motives for giving his letter its present form. The writer would be

extremely sorry to pin his unquestioning faith upon Emanuel Swedenborg, or any other man; but no one familiar with the writings of that remarkable person can doubt, that they probably furnish the best antidote to the sectarian *virus* of any book extant, save of course the New Testament, of which overflowing reservoir they are in fact but a very ample and a very artless service-pipe.

It is proper to say, what, however, will abundantly appear from the pages of the Tract itself, that it was originally designed for American circulation. It is now reprinted here by the author, with considerable additions, and some verbal alterations.

London, 1856.

A LETTER OF REMONSTRANCE,

ETC. ETC.

SIR :—

You and I are equally persuaded, doubtless, that a new church which, according to the tenor of ancient promise, is destined to be the crown and consummation of all past churches, is now forming in the earth; and if we have equally reflected upon the characteristic scope or genius of this church, as depicted in the almost transparent language of prophecy, we must be equally convinced that it is full both of sympathy towards every existing form of use or goodness, and of mercy, gentleness, patience, towards every form of ignorance and unconscious error.

For, what is meant by a church, to which the voice of inspiration does not hesitate to apply the mystic name of New Jerusalem? What is meant by a church which may truly be styled the crown and consummation of all past churches? or, what is the same thing, which shall express God's full pleasure in humanity? Clearly it is not meant to be a mere rival or competitor to any other

church. Clearly it is not meant to be a better church of the same kind as already exists. Churches of the existing sort have only dwindled ever since the stately days of Moses and Aaron. Starting from that gorgeous prime, they have descended through the diminished pomp of the Romish ritual, and the Anglican attenuation of that, until the acme of desquamation seems at length attained in the pinched and wintry ceremonial of our own Congregationalism. And even if this sort of church should be revived in its full Mosaic splendor, would it be a work worthy of God? Will the Divine name be written as legibly under these skies on stone and mortar, on ephod and breastplate, as on the fleshly tablets of the busy human heart? I think not. I think indeed that a church which by dint of holding its breath, or arresting the transit of the divine influx, should swell itself to more than Papal or even Mosaic resonance, would only swell itself away from the whole divine meaning it ever contained. For the true meaning of every Divine institution has been to serve as a witness merely to the invisible Divine, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, much less therefore any house or polity of man's invention. Consequently any visible church, technically either "old" or "new," which should profess to constitute God's true abode on earth, would only repeat the Jewish mistake, and incur the like public contempt.

Besides, when we talk of the crown and consummation of a thing, we do not mean any rival or hostile thing on the same plane with itself; we mean some discretely higher thing,—say its faculty of use or action. Thus when we talk of the crown and consummation of a plant, we mean its flower or fruit, assuredly not some other and hostile plant. In like manner, the crown and consummation of an animal body is its will or faculty of voluntary motion, not some new and rival form of animation. And the crown and consummation of the human organization is not any new and superior organization which is to supersede the old, but its faculty of virtuous activity, or the fruit of a holy life. In fact, the crown and consummation of any natural thing is always the use it effects, is always the superb fruit it bears. Thus the crown and consummation of the mineral kingdom is not some new and precious form of mineral existence, but the vegetable form to whose development all its uses are tributary. And so in like manner the crown and consummation of the vegetable kingdom is not some rare and splendid form of vegetation, but on the contrary the animal form, to the development of which the vegetable kingdom is wholly subservient. And so, again, the crown and consummation of the animal kingdom is not some new and glorious form of animality, but the human form, to which all the realm of animal existence is tributary or subordinate. In all these

cases we see progressive development to be the intention and method of nature. We never see her returning upon herself, or stopping short in her career to amend the work she has made, and bring out a second edition of the same performance. We see her going straight onward from the foundation of her edifice, through all its successive grades or stories to its roof and skylight, and stopping only when the faultless house stands before you radiant in beauty, and inexpugnable in strength.

Analogically, therefore, when we look for a new church in the earth which is to be the crown and consummation of all past churches, we are not to look for a mere second edition of the existing ecclesiasticism ; we are not to look for a new and rival ecclesiastical organization to that of the old church ; we are not to look for a new and competitive priesthood, nor for a new and competitive baptism, nor for a new and competitive eucharist. This sort of newness the church experiences *usque ad nauseam* every few years, upon the occasion of the outbirth of every new sect. No, in looking for that new church which is to be the crown and consummation of all past churches, we are to look for the incorruptible spirit of which these past churches have been only the preparatory and perishable letter, for the ripe and perfect fruit of which they have been the temporary and unconscious husks. In short, we are to look for a spiritual church, which, being identical with the

broadest charity in the life of man, must always refuse to become identified with particular persons, particular places, or particular rituals of worship.

Such, of necessity, is the character of the church of Christ. It is a spiritual economy, and is therefore identical only with what is humble and tender and easy to be entreated in the soul of man. Heaven is not more distant from earth than is sectarianism, or the desire to separate oneself from others, distant from the mind of the true churchman. Instead of saying to Calvinist or Catholic, to Methodist or Episcopalian, "Stand aside, we possess a holier priesthood than you, and put forth a more acceptable baptism and eucharist than you," the true churchman taking counsel of the divine love in his heart, says, "Draw near, my brother, and let us worship together. There is but one priesthood known on high, the priesthood of goodness, and one baptism and communion, that which unites instead of dividing the household of faith. The two outward ordinances which we have received from the Lord's hand are uniting, not dividing ordinances ; they are so divinely large as to accommodate all heavenly truth, and hence to unite in their equal embrace every true worshipper of God, in every clime, and of every name under heaven. He, consequently, who claims that they are adapted to symbolize only the truth he professes, or that they lend themselves more

willingly to his worship than to that of other and less instructed men, virtually claims to possess all truth, and in so doing proves that he is himself an alien from the entire spirit of truth. No, my friend, let us worship together, calling upon one and the same blessed Lord and Redeemer. You possibly do not know many of the spiritual things contained within the obscurity of the literal Scriptures; but all *saving knowledge is amply contained in the letter of sacred Scripture, and is to be drawn exclusively from it*; and you, doubtless, are as sincerely zealous of the honour of the letter as I can claim to be. But even if it were otherwise, even if the common doctrine of the church were not deducible from the letter of Scripture, but only from its spiritual contents, I yet know so little of those contents, compared with what is to be known, that the difference between my knowledge and your ignorance in this respect sinks into absolute nought. And yet, on the other hand, I know so well the magnanimous and divine spirit of all that truth, thus contained invisibly to natural sight within the literal page,—I know so well the boundless love and charity with which it is all a-glow, that I could never think of making any amount of superior information I possessed a ground of glorying over others, or a warrant for expecting a greater complacency on God's part to my worship than yours. On the contrary, the spirit of all truth is goodness, the

substance of all faith is charity, and hence the more I feel the spirit of truth the less I value all merely external and intellectual differences among men, and the more I value all cordial and vital agreement."

Now, no one can doubt that this is the attitude of the true churchman. Every one in whom the church truly exists is a regenerate man, is a form of charity, and nothing can be more intolerable to such a man than the attempt to separate him from others, or give him an ecclesiastical elevation above others. He cannot be persuaded by any amount of sophistry, or any force of clerical domination, long to falsify his fundamental instincts in this particular. He will go on to suffocate and suffer, until at length he throws off the incumbent mass of ecclesiastical pride and dotage, and emerges for ever into the lustrous air and warm sunshine of God's boundless love. The true Christian allows others to separate from him as much as they please, as much as their unfortunate narrowness makes it inevitable to them; but he feels it necessary to separate himself from no one. His mission is one of love, and therefore of fusion and unity, instead of separation or disunity. Hence, although he claims the right to worship on Sundays with whomsoever he pleases, and to employ for that purpose every improved form of worship, he yet takes care to abjure the imputation of any spiritual separation from his brethren, professing his stead-

fast allegiance to the same Lord whom they equally profess to obey. He does not attempt to construe his arrangements for an improved social worship, into a fact of public significance, nor does he claim for what is purely conventional and transitory that public importance which is due only to what is spiritual and eternal. Hence, he remains in ecclesiastical unity with the people around him, being content to enjoy unimpaired his spiritual freedom and the freedom of external worship wheresoever and with whomsoever he pleases.

The only legitimate newness of the Christian Church consists in a newness of spirit among its members, not a newness of letter. The letter of the church consists *unalterably* in its two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. A new *literal* church, therefore, must disown these ordinances, must exhibit new ordinances, instinct with new meaning. Clearly, Swedenborg never contemplated such a church. Never once in the whole course of his writings has he criticized the administration of the Christian ordinances, or declared it defective, save in respect to the withholding the cup from the laity in the Roman Church. He waged no war whatever with the church as an ecclesiasticism, though I doubt not he had his just Protestant predilections, but only as a corrupt spiritual economy. He complained of it only in that respect wherein the Lord complains of it, namely, as being destitute of the life of charity,

and being therefore, to all heavenly intents and purposes, dead or inactive. Accordingly, you never find him proposing so cheap and superficial a remedy for so grave a disease, as the creation of a new ecclesiastical organization. How should a new ecclesiastical hierarchy mend matters? The complaint was not against a particular set of persons, as contrasted with another set. The complaint was not that certain persons, called God's church, were worse men spiritually than certain other persons, which other persons must therefore be formed into a new ecclesiastical body, and made to supersede the old one. By no means. The complaint was, that the entire mind of man, as ecclesiastically exhibited, was in spiritual corruption and death, and hence the remedy befitting this condition could not be a change in the personal administration of the church, or a change in the persons composing it, but a complete renovation of the human mind. What the church wanted was not a new body, or a new literal constitution, but exclusively a new spirit, the spirit of unfeigned human love or fellowship.

Hence, you never find Swedenborg discussing any questions of ecclesiastical polity, or suggesting any measures of ecclesiastical reform, except that of the administration of the eucharist in the Roman Church. He thought, indeed, that from the circumstance of that church exalting a life of charity in its doctrines more than the reformed

churches do, it would more easily receive the new truths than any other church, provided it would rectify its administration of the eucharist, and dismiss the worship of saints. But all this, of course, was matter of private opinion. You always find him treating questions of ritual or external difference between churches as of no spiritual significance, save as contributing indeed to the greater *unity* of the church when charity was its spiritual bond. He invariably represents the true Christian, or the man in whom charity dwells, as gratefully and reverently observing the institutions of public worship established in his nation, and on no occasion whatever does he represent him as finding these institutions inadequate to his need. So, also, whenever he talks of the external of the church, he does not represent it as consisting in a Sunday ritual, or a correct liturgical form, but exclusively in goodness of life. "The church of the Lord," says he in 403 of *A. Explained*, "is both internal and external: the internal of the church consists of charity and faith thence derived, but *the external of the church* is THE GOOD OF LIFE, or the WORKS of charity and faith;" that is, all those things which charity and faith operate in our social relations. Consistently with this definition you find him, throughout his writings, making no ecclesiastical complaint of the church, but only a spiritual complaint, as to its destitution of charity. Thus, he says the existing

array of divided churches, as Catholic and Protestant, and the various subdivisions of these again, would be perfectly conformable to the Divine Mind, were they only animated by mutual love or charity. "THE THINGS OF DOCTRINE," he says in his *Celestial Arcana*, 1790, "DO NOT DISTINGUISH CHURCHES BEFORE THE LORD,"—that is to say, the Lord knows no difference between a church professing true doctrine and one professing false—"but this distinction is effected BY A LIFE ACCORDING TO THE THINGS OF DOCTRINE, all of which if they are true, regard charity as their fundamental, for what is the end and design of doctrine but to teach how man should live! The several churches in the Christian world are doctrinally distinguished into Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists. This diversity of name arises solely from the things of doctrine, and would never have had place if the members of the church had made love to the Lord, and charity towards their neighbour, the principal point of faith. Things of doctrine would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which THEY WHO ARE TRUE CHRISTIANS would leave to every one to believe according to his conscience, whilst it would be the language of their hearts THAT HE IS A TRUE CHRISTIAN WHO LIVES AS A CHRISTIAN, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus, *one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones*, and all disagreements arising from mere forms of doc-

trine would vanish ; yea, all the animosities of one against another would be dissipated, and THE KINGDOM OF THE LORD WOULD BE ESTABLISHED ON THE EARTH." Think of that, my sectarian friend. These old Christian sects whom you propose to supersede, Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran, with all their subdivisions, were they only enlivened by mutual love or fellowship, would present no ecclesiastical obstacle to the divine truth, but would really constitute the Lord's kingdom on earth, would constitute the true and spiritual church which is identical with that kingdom. How much wider the sympathies of this great man were than they are represented to have been by those who make use of his name to originate a new ecclesiasticism ! Let us sing a few more brief hymns to the same blessed tune, from the same general repository. "All the members of the primitive Christian church," he says, *A. C.*, 1834, "lived one amongst another as brethren, and mutually loved each other. But in process of time charity diminished, and at length vanished away ; and as charity vanished, evils succeeded ; and with evils falsities also insinuated themselves, whence arose schisms and heresies. These would never have existed, if charity had continued to live and rule ; *for in such case they would not have called schism by the name of schism, nor heresy by the name of heresy*, but they would have called them doctrines agreeable to each person's parti-

cular opinion, or way of thinking, which they would have left to every one's conscience, not judging or condemning any for their opinions, provided they did not deny fundamental principles: that is, the Lord, eternal life, and the Word; and maintained nothing contrary to divine order: that is, to the commandments of the decalogue." "The false principle within the church," he says, *A. C.*, 2351, "which favors evils of life, is that goodness or charity doth not constitute a man of the church, but that church membership is effected by truth or faith." "As man becomes internal and instructed by internal things, externals are as nothing to him; for he then knows what is sacred,—namely, charity and faith grounded therein." Again he says, in *A. C.* 3122, "The regenerate man makes no account of the things of faith or truth;" that is, of course, holds them to be wholly subordinate to a life of charity. "Faith, in the Word, means nothing but love and charity: hence, doctrines and tenets of faith are not faith, but only appurtenances of it."—*A. C.*, 2116.

"Love to the Lord *cannot possibly be separated from love to the neighbor*, for the Lord's love is towards the whole human race, which he desires to save eternally, and to adjoin entirely to himself, so as for none of them to perish: wherefore WHOEVER HAS LOVE TO THE LORD, HAS THE LORD'S LOVE, and cannot help loving his neighbor."—*A. C.*, 2023.

“When it is said there is no salvation in any name but that of the Lord, it means that there is salvation in no other doctrine; that is, IN NO OTHER THING THAN MUTUAL LOVE, which is the true doctrine of faith.”—*A. C.*, 2009.

“The essential of worship is hearty adoration of the Lord, which does not exist, save in so far as the heart be principled in charity or neighborly love. All true worship is adoration of the Lord; for the Lord is never present in external worship, unless internal worship be contained in it.”—*A. C.*, 1150.

“Many say, ‘that there is no internal worship without external, when yet the truth of the case is, *that there is no external without internal.*’”—*A. C.*, 1175.

“The new church is to be established only among those *who are in a life of good.*”—*A. C.*, 3898.

“The church is one, notwithstanding its diversities of doctrine, when all acknowledge *charity as the essential* of the church, or, what is the same thing, when they have respect to life as the end of doctrine; that is, when they inquire HOW A MAN OF THE CHURCH LIVES, *and not so much what are his sentiments.*”—*A. C.*, 3341.

“The church *must needs vary as to doctrine*, one society or one man professing one opinion, and another another. *But as long as each lives in charity*, HE IS IN THE CHURCH AS TO LIFE, *whether*

he be as to doctrine or not, and, consequently, the Lord's church or kingdom is in him."—*A. C.*, 3451.

"Doctrinals are not designed to direct the thoughts so much as the life, for what is their end, but that a man may become what they teach him to be."—*A. C.*, 2982.

Again, in his latest work, entitled, *The True Christian Religion*, 784, when expressly describing the formation of the church, he says, "that this cannot be effected in a moment, *but in proportion as the falses of the former church are removed*; and this must first take place among the clergy, and by their means among the laity."

Now, surely, this whole strain of observation is inconsistent with the notion of any just stigma attaching to the Christian Church, considered as an ecclesiastical constitution, and utterly forbids the conception of the new church therefore as a new and militant ecclesiastical polity. No one, indeed, can read Swedenborg at all intelligently without being convinced that the Christian ordinances of Baptism and the Holy Supper were never given by the Lord for the purpose of symbolizing a particular creed, or celebrating a certain doctrinal consensus on the part of his professed followers. They were given to be a sign or memorial of the universal spirit which, under all varieties of doctrinal and ritual observance, reigns among his followers, namely, a regenerative spirit, a spirit

which proceeds upon the putting away the evils of the natural heart as sins against God, typified by baptism, and the consequent reception of goods and truths from the Lord, typified by the eucharist. These ordinances have thus a most universal scope, being addressed solely to the foreshadowing of the great facts of life, in which all God's children are one, and not in the slightest degree to the foreshadowing of those minor facts of doctrine, as to which all God's children, simply because they are his children, must eternally differ. It is this universality of scope in the Christian ordinances which fits them to symbolize the new or spiritual and universal Christian Church, because what this church primarily regards is the life of fellowship, or a spiritual new birth in man, and the ordinances of baptism and the supper are the express images and types, are the divinely appointed signs and seals of this regenerate life. No matter how much a man may misconceive the literal text of Scripture, no matter how full of absurd traditions or superstitions his ecclesiastical memory may be, so long as he professes to believe in the Lord and avoids evils as sins, he is a perfectly proper recipient of the Christian ordinances, let them be administered where or by whom they may ; as proper a recipient, let me add, and one as precious in the Lord's sight as if, instead of his own native ignorance on these subjects, he possessed the angel Gabriel's plenary illumination.

We may well feel, therefore, how merited a scorn shall one day betide any communion which excludes such a man from it in the Lord's name. We may well feel what scorn shall especially betide any corporation which, assuming the sacred name of New Jerusalem, yet seeks to turn these divinely appointed vessels of the Lord's house aside from their benign and universal uses, to the service of its own ecclesiastical pomp and vanity.

Now, certainly, if the spirit of the new economy be as I have described it, if charity be the sum of the true Christian Church, the sum of its life, and the sum of its doctrine—and I defy any one rationally to gainsay this—then it is highly incumbent on those who profess to be devoted to the interests of true Christianity, to inquire what hinders the spread of it among men. Let us proceed briefly to do this.

Observe: the inquiry we propose to make is not as to the obstacles which defeat the spread of true religion in the world generally. Undoubtedly the main obstacle to the spread of true religion in the world, is a very prevalent indifference to the concerns of man's spiritual history and destiny, growing out of the still unregenerate lusts of self-love and the love of the world. This obstacle you and I, in common with all the rest of the world, experience to the life of true religion in our souls. True religion is of so heavenly a genius, its temper is so humane, so instinct with the vital breath of

charity, that it necessarily encounters the stupid antagonism of the natural heart in all of us, and is always obliged to conquer, therefore, wherever it takes possession. But this is not the point we are now to consider. It is a most interesting point, doubtless; but we have one still more interesting before us, which is this: what obstacles exist in the minds of religious people—people who are sincerely anxious to know and do the will of God—to the reception of new church light, as that light stands disclosed in the remarkable writings of Swedenborg? This is our question. We find multitudes of tender, generous, and profoundly religious minds in all the divided Christian sects, who are consciously starving and perishing upon the slender fare which is hebdomadally served out to them, and we ask, what is it which hinders these persons immediately receiving the stupendous consolations of the new and spiritual church?

Now, my friend, permit me to say, that I think there can be but one answer to this inquiry, and it is, that these persons are continually taught to look upon the new church, not as a spiritual and therefore universal church, but simply as a new Christian sect, and upon the writings of Swedenborg, consequently, as the ravings of a fanatical or disordered brain. I say these persons are *taught* to take this view of the new church pretensions. And if you ask me how they are thus taught, I answer, by the purely ecclesiastical aspect which is given

to the new church idea, by so many sincere but inconsiderate admirers of Swedenborg. The dramatic or self-styled new church assumes before the world simply the attitude of a new ecclesiastical organization, or a new organization for external worship, claiming a new clerical order, and a more virtuous or valid administration of the Christian ordinances than pertains to any other sect. Thus, the world is led to consider the new church, not as a new life or spirit in man, growing out of a renewed nature, and exemplifying itself in the broadest and most genuine social fellowship, or in every form of domestic, social, civil and religious use, but only as a new visible sect, having a local habitation and a name, and capable therefore of being geometrically defined and demonstrated. And, accordingly, when you meet a person whose thoughts are exercised about infinite truth and goodness, or who suffers in soul from the violence which is done to these interests by the spirit of sect—when you meet such a person and set before him the claims of the new church to his regard, he replies at once, “Do you mean by the new church, the sect that worships in such or such a place, and seeks to procure itself a name by outwardly separating itself from all other worship? Because, if you mean that, I really do not see that you promise me any improvement. The persons who compose my present ecclesiastical connection are very good persons generally, very good neigh-

bours, very good citizens; and besides all that are too modest to claim before the world any *peculiar* ecclesiastical nearness to God, as the sect in question does. I have no fault to find with my ecclesiastical connection consequently, at least no such fault as promises to be remedied by a mere change of connection. In short, my troubles are not at all ecclesiastical, but spiritual. One ecclesiasticism is quite as good as another to me, were the vital spirit of it only divine. What I lack in them all is, that close internal fusion or sympathy of the members, which could not fail to be felt in them all if God's love were their life, and not an unchastised ambition for mutual pre-eminence. How should I be helped, then, by going among the people in question? Do they not pretend to offer God a more acceptable worship than the Presbyterians or Catholics or Episcopalians? Do they not claim a new ministry? Do they accept Presbyterian or Methodist baptism? Will they allow Bishop Wainwright or Dr. Channing to administer the Lord's Supper to them? If all these things are so, will you tell me wherein this self-styled new church differs in spirit from all the older sects, unless perhaps in being rather more sectarian? And if it do not differ in *spirit* from the older sects, why then, of course, it is nothing new under the sun, but something on the contrary—very stale, flat, and unprofitable. A new church must prove itself such by *newness of spirit*, by a

spirit of universal charity, a charity which shall loathe to be pre-eminent even over Pagans and Turks, let alone its fellow-Christians. Any spirit short of this, any spirit which virtually says to sincere worshippers of whatever name, ‘Stand aside! we claim to offer a more acceptable worship than you!’ is an extremely ancient spirit,—is as ancient at least as that unhappy Pharisee we read of in Holy Writ, who approached the temple of divine worship, saying, ‘Father, I THANK THEE that I am not as other men,’ &c., and who therefore went down to his house considerably disadvantaged from other men.”

I say, *therefore*, because if a man so mistakes the Divine character as to suppose Him a respecter of persons, and to give Him thanks accordingly for private or personal favours, it is manifest that the man’s worship is animated by self-love, and the Divine name consequently grossly profaned. Of course it is the dictate of true religion to refer all good to the Lord, and all evil to the devil: but true religion dictates no comparisons or contrasts between ourselves and others, nor indeed does she tolerate any such comparisons, declaring them, on the contrary, utterly incompatible with her heavenly temper. When I feel disposed to thank God for greater ecclesiastical privileges than my neighbours, or, what is the same thing, a nearer access to him than my neighbours enjoy,—when ever, looking upon Dr. Potts or Dr. Hawks,

I felicitate myself upon the knowledge of a rival priesthood superior to theirs; or, whenever looking upon the ordinances of the universal church, as administered by their hands, I congratulate myself that they are more efficaciously administered elsewhere—it is no longer religion which animates me—it is no longer the blessed spirit of charity, but the accursed spirit of sect, or a temper of genuine self-love, which, if left unchecked, must issue in confirmed diabolism.

Do not misunderstand me. It is very far from my intention, because it is very far from my desire, to cast disparagement upon any institutions of social worship. It seems to me entirely proper and inevitable that those who sympathize with each other's views of Christian doctrine, should come together, at suitable times and places, for social worship. Nothing could be more delightful than an assembly of this sort, when animated solely by a spirit of charity towards all other assemblies, and having nothing to gain by disparaging them in public estimation. An assembly like this, united in cordial adoration of the Divine love, and intent only on celebrating His ineffable perfection, would stand in an attitude of the tenderest sympathy towards all other assemblies. It would never dream of impugning the truth of their worship by publishing it as the only true church of God in New York; but it would strive, on the contrary, to show them the

riches of spiritual consolation which are embodied in the Christian ordinances wherever administered, and prove how every particular of their own worship is fragrant with the inward acknowledgment of Divine mercy and peace. No, let us worship together in this spirit to our hearts' content, and under whatever orderly routine befits our taste. Let us have architecture, let us have music, let us have singing, let us have preaching, and the concerted voice of prayer; let us have, in short, whatever graceful and glowing forms may be deemed suitable to express a worship so cordial, and therefore so cheerful, so rational and therefore so profoundly reverential, as that which is inspired by the new truths must necessarily be. All this is right and sweet and beautiful; and I cannot imagine any one but a sour and surly sectarian objecting to it. No one, indeed, can object to it, unless he be disposed to deny freedom of worship altogether. Every one, on the contrary, must see that it is a suitable and decorous thing for persons whose intellects are forming upon the same general class of truths, to seek each other's sympathy in public or social worship. But what every one has a right to complain of, as an unsuitable and indecorous thing, is for this company thus coming together for worship to arrogate to themselves the name and authority of the Lord, in any such sense as prejudices the equal right of any other worshipping assembly to do the same

thing. I believe very fully in the interior truths of the Scripture as they are unfolded by Swedenborg, and I instruct my family in the knowledge of those truths, so far as their tender understandings are capable of receiving them. Have I thereupon the right to say that my family worship is one whit truer or more acceptable in a heavenward way, than that of my next door neighbour, who never heard of any interior sense in the Scripture, or if he has, deems it a very great snare and delusion, and steadily worships, notwithstanding, according to the plenary Presbyterian platform? Assuredly not. Shall the truth of any man's reverence and worship of the Great Being who creates and redeems and preserves him, hinge upon his possessing adequate conceptions of the Divine perfections, and offering a homage therefore which shall be worthy of these perfections? God help the best of us! in that case, say I. For this is to place worship in a new ground entirely,—no longer in a sense of the profound wants of the heart,—no longer in the deep and cordial and overwhelming sense of our own deficiencies, of our own relative nothingness and vanity, and of God's boundless sufficiency, but rather in one's intellectual acquisitions, in the sentiment of possessing a superior illumination to other people.

But if I have no right to defame my neighbour's family worship, on the ground of its utter unconsciousness of the new truths, if I have no right to

suppose that the Lord views my family worship with more complacency than he does that of my Presbyterian neighbour; what right have I and those who socially worship with me to suppose, that He views our *social* worship with any more complacency than He does that of the Baptists, Catholics, Unitarians, Presbyterians, or Mohammedans? What right have we to claim, in our social capacity, a comparative nearness to God over other societies, which we have no right to claim in our family capacities? If I myself, with all my hearty delight in the new truths, do not contribute any element to my family worship which makes it capable of disparaging my neighbour's family worship before God, do, pray, tell me how any fifty or five hundred of us assembling for social worship shall contribute any element to that worship which shall have the effect to disparage any other sincere worship before God? If I have no right in my private devotions to stigmatize my neighbour's devotions as old and worthless and dead, what right have I to do so in my public worship? What right have I to advertise *my* public devotions as new and living and valid, and his, by implication, as old, spiritless, and unprofitable?

Of course, it is perfectly proper for people who sympathize in any particular views of divine truth, and who desire to express that sympathy in forms of social worship, to advertise their place of meeting, for the benefit of all persons interested. Or,

if we wish to assail the popular doctrines by means of lectures, sermons, and so forth, let us clearly advertise our intention. But let us not put forth immodest hand-bills, informing the world that here the true church is to be found, and inferentially therefore not anywhere else in the city, under penalty of affronting the most intimate spirit of that church.

You may very properly say to the world, if you please, that you are about establishing, or have already established, external Christian worship, in such a place, on an improved basis, or with a spirit modified by new light; but to say that any amount of such worship gives you the slightest claim to the world's recognition as the "New Jerusalem," as the grand end and achievement of all divine promise and prophecy,—gives you the slightest right to arrogate to yourselves one particle of the consideration which belongs to that divine and immaculate economy, is to say what only a complete ignorance of the spirit of that economy prompts. The new church in man is a regenerate life, a life of universal love or charity, a life which is no more consistent with the claim of superior ecclesiastical merit before God than it is with that of superior moral or physical merit. I am ashamed to go before God saying that I am a better man, morally, than John Smith, and that I should like therefore a superior celestial position to his. Why am I thus ashamed? Because the plea insultingly

implies that God is a respecter of persons; thus, that one of His creatures is less dependent upon Him than another. By what infatuation is it, then, that one is not ashamed to do ecclesiastically that which he is thus ashamed to do personally? For you are not ashamed, every Sunday, to claim before the world, and challenge the world's recognition of the fact, that you are, ecclesiastically, much nearer to God than the Catholic Bishop Hughes, the Presbyterian Bishop Phillips, or the Unitarian Bishop Bellows. What, I ask, is the explanation of this scandalous incongruity?

The explanation is to be sought in the prevalence of totally erroneous or sectarian views of the church. The sectarian idea of the church is, that it is primarily a visible corporation, hierarchically constituted, whose life lies in Sunday worship, and whose proper activity consists accordingly in promoting all the resources and interests of that worship. According to this conception of the church, a man is what he is chiefly by virtue of his connection with that visible body; that visible body stands between him and God, and is the medium of the divine blessing to him, so that he may be called upon to honour it as his spiritual mother, with precisely the same propriety that he may be called upon to honour God as his spiritual Father. We find the conception everywhere diffused, and hear it expounded and enforced from all sorts of pulpits; but the only consistent and

worthy representative of it is the Roman Catholic Church. No person who holds this theory of the church, who holds the ecclesiastical conception of it, and maintains it *ex animo*, has any logical right to disclaim the paternal authority of Bishop Hughes, and must either in this world or the next filially submit himself to it. He may call himself a Protestant against the Church of Rome, and may protest till he is black in the face, but when he at last finds that the Church of Rome is the only logical exponent of his idea of the church,—when he finds that all logic and all experience and all testimony go to substantiate her sole claim to the name of church in this view,—when, in short, it comes to the choice of the Church of Rome or no church at all of that same general type or pattern, he will infallibly swallow the nauseous medicine, I have not a doubt.

I cannot, indeed, understand how any one who holds to the ecclesiastical conception of the church can for an instant deny the paramount claims of the Romish hierarchy upon his allegiance. If the Church of Christ possess of necessity an ecclesiastical constitution, or, what is the same thing, an inseparable external organization, based upon the distinction of clergy and laity, then the Roman Church is the only true church, because it alone permanently secures such an organization. Had the Protestant been as stoutly pushed *à tergo* as the Catholic has been pushed by him, and as he

himself bids fair to be pushed in the future, he must long ere this have acknowledged that the only consistent ecclesiasticism is that of Rome. The Roman Catholic makes the church to consist wholly in the Pope and his inferior clergy, just as the old theories of the State left out the people; or, as the little boys when they form amateur military companies, make them to consist wholly of captains, lieutenants, and corporals. We may smile at this infantine simplicity on the part of the church, or weep over its boundless spiritual arrogance as we please, but it affords, nevertheless, the only infallible recipe for the church's perpetuity, considered as an ecclesiastical institution. If we want conviction on this point we have only to refer to the utter disorganization which the hierarchical idea, or the church considered as having an inseparable ecclesiastical organization, encounters at Protestant hands. The Protestant democratizes the idea of the church, making it to consist not of one power alone, not of the clergy simply, but of the clergy and people jointly. But this theory, by commixing the two orders, and leaving their respective parts wholly undefined, like a military company whose officers and privates should possess a joint authority, is destructive of all discipline, and has actually ended in the complete disorganization of the church as an ecclesiasticism. What is your own ecclesiastical pretension in fact but a proof of

this? Your own sect is a striking fruit and exemplification of the purely disorganizing tendencies of Protestantism. In the first place, a handful of laymen, reared in the bosom of Protestantism, and united in nothing but a profession of faith in the remarkable writings of a very remarkable man, combine, by mutually baptizing each other, to establish a new ecclesiastical organization which shall have the effect to supersede all the older organizations, and vacate alike the authority of their priesthoods and the sanctity of their sacraments. But as these persons can legitimately claim no other warrant for this new organization than their own wills—as they exhibit no divine sanctions for it in the shape of new baptisms or other sacraments distinguishing them from the old organizations—as, in short, they are only a new Christian sect to all the recognized intents and purposes of a sect, they cannot of course propagate any but sectarian offspring, and must tolerate every schism and division and heresy which may subsequently arise to rend their own bowels, and deliver them in their own turn an easy prey to dissolution. Accordingly, I know no sect so young that gives such unequivocal proofs of senility as your own; I know no sect so inconsiderable in point of numbers, which has already bred so many “doting questions and strifes of words.” For this result I say you are indebted only to your inherent Protestantism, or the mother that bore you; for

as Protestantism was not a new church, spiritually considered, but only a new form or modification of one and the same ecclesiastical spirit, so your more limited movement exhibits no spiritual advance upon the older Protestant sects, but only a highly rational and comfortable modification of their ritual observances. Thus, you have no right to glory over the Protestant sects through which all your own ecclesiastical validity is derived ; just as they have no right to glory over the Catholic Church, seeing that whatsoever hierarchical virtue they possess is but a puny rill of that once affluent, but now moss-grown and dishonoured fountain. Neither of you has the slightest reason for boasting over the other, save on the ground of a spiritual superiority, or a more eminent life of charity ; and eminence in that life is scarcely consistent with ecclesiastical or any other sort of boasting, being identical in fact with the greatest personal humility.

Do I complain of these unhandsome quarrels, however ? Do I regret the grand original fact of Protestantism ? Do I regret the great subsequent facts which have marked her history, and developed her true or characteristic tendencies ? God forbid ! I look upon them all as facts full of blessed significance for the true church of God, for the true life of God in the soul of man. Had we not had Catholicism in the first place, or an ecclesiastical economy paramount to the civil and poli-

tical *régime*, the human mind must have lacked the necessary germ or egg of the true idea of the church. We could never have conceived in that case of the Divine life in man, as destined eventually to control and sanctify his civil and natural life. Had we not had Protestantism, again, we should have had no disorganization of this primary and beneficent germ, nor consequently any development of the miraculous spirit which informs it. I have, indeed, no doubt that the Providence which governs human affairs is altogether Divine, for I see throughout all history the unswerving march of a great spiritual end or purpose, which is so high above man's thought as to find its stepping-stones alternately in his wisdom and his folly, and so high above his best affections, as to make his very vices contribute an equal furtherance with his virtues to its final evolution.

I need not say to you, that I look upon this end or purpose of the Divine Providence as identical with that new church of which the world has so long and so reverently read in ancient prophecy, and of whose advent the roseate dawn is at length flushing the entire mental horizon of humanity ; that new and everlasting church, the crown and consummation of all past churches, which is constituted solely by the regenerate *nature* of her members, or a life of *spontaneous* love to God and man. It is identical with what the mystical Scriptures call the New Jerusalem, meaning by that

carnal symbol nothing indeed appreciable to the carnal eye, nor at all germane to the carnal heart, but a truly Divine change in the nature of man. It is, also, called a new church, both because it is the crown and fulfilment of all past churches, and because a church in the spiritual idea invariably signifies a regenerate life in man. This church is not aristocratically constituted, like the Romish Church, nor yet democratically, like the Protestant Churches. It is not made up of clergy alone, nor of clergy and people jointly ; but simply of human love and fellowship in the soul of every individual man. It is not made a church by any amount or any exactitude of ritual worship, any more than I am made a father by the number of kisses I give my children. No man can say of it, lo here ! or, lo there ! any more than he can limit the path of the lightning which now shines in one part of the heavens, and now in the opposite ; for as all her members are born such, they will have no consciousness of merit, leading them either to seek or to accept conspicuity.

Unlike the typical churches, this perfect church finds its only fit expression in the regenerate *nature* of its members. The existing ecclesiasticisms, both Catholic and Protestant, proceed exclusively upon the *spiritual* regeneration of their members, and hence postpone our realization of the Divine beatitudes to *post mortem* states. The new church, on the contrary, by its acknowledgment of the

Divine NATURAL Humanity, and of the consequent perfect subjugation of hell to heaven, implicitly affirms the regeneration of human nature itself, and leads us to expect a realization of those beatitudes even on the earth. The old church temper exhibits hell in rampant insubordination to heaven, as in fact incessantly essaying to subjugate heaven to its own insane uses. The saint of the old church consequently is in a state of perpetual warfare with his nature, now elated as heaven apparently prevails in his bosom, now depressed as hell appears to preponderate, perilling his salvation at one moment from spiritual conceit and inflation, at the next from spiritual inertness and despair. The new church saint, on the other hand, finds the evil principle or self-love, completely subjected in his nature to the good principle, which is brotherly love, and is therefore no longer *dis-*joined with God by his nature, but on the contrary, most intimately *conjoined*. In short, the old sanctity constrains man in opposition to his nature, while the new sanctity comes about by a divine change wrought in that very nature. The old sanctity being an individual thing, being the result apparently of individual struggle and effort, is very apt to beget a boastful spirit; the new, for the opposite reason, very obviously disclaims that spirit, everywhere engendering in fact a genuine humility. All baptisms, and sacraments, and priesthoods vail their servile faces before the

Divine presence in our nature, confessing that their sole use has been, not to fulfil, but merely to typify or witness that adorable truth. The new and final church consequently will place her distinctive marks not in any of these things, but only in the abounding fruits of our Divinely regenerated nature. It is totally absurd to suppose that the life of human love and fellowship which now flows in from the new heavens, will long consist with our effete ecclesiasticism, or save its altars from unmitigated popular contempt. If the new church spirit teach her individual subject to blow trumpets before him in the public streets, proclaiming that he is a regenerate man; if it teach him to invite public attention by printed handbills whenever he seeks to celebrate the Divine Perfection by prayer and praise; if it teach him to advertise himself as God's true child, in contradistinction to others who only falsely profess to be so; if it teach him to acknowledge the divine life only in those who entertain the same theological opinions as himself, or read the same theological books: why then, of course, the greater church will do the same things,—that is to say, will soon render the name of “new church” the synonyme of whatsoever is sectarian in temper or vulgar and disreputable in manners. But if the new spirit prescribe no such behaviour to her votaries; if the man who is naturally renewed, in whom the spirit of human fellowship rules, be necessarily the

least conscious of the difference between himself and other men, and the least disposed to magnify such difference; if he be disposed to hide the shortcomings of his brother, and discover only the things that make for peace and universal unity; if he perceive in the law of God a height and depth, a length and breadth of spiritual perfection which laughs to scorn the bare thought of merit in God's sight, and makes our truest wealth to lie in the unaffected consciousness of our utter want: why, then, of course the new church will every where intensify these individual characteristics until she utterly sink from all identification with persons or places or rituals, and stamp herself as one only with whatsoever is pure and unsullied in human aspiration, and manly, just, and generous in human conduct.

In short, the true or final church is not in the least degree an ecclesiasticism, is not in any outward sense a hierarchical institution. Were it so, it would have existed from the beginning of the world, for the world has never been without authentic hierarchies, or true ecclesiastical institutions. I do not see what reasonable fault is to be found with either the Jewish worship or with that of the Christian Church, if they are to be replaced only by other external worship. The Jewish priests reflected, no doubt, the prevalent arrogance and selfishness of the national hope, but, I presume, were otherwise a superior class of men.

And the Christian priesthood, although the temptations incident to their conventional elevation have served to develope among them many of the subtler forms of evil latent in the undisciplined human heart, have yet on the whole been lustrous with many virtues. You will occasionally find one among them with a conscience like the hide of a rhinoceros, and a lust of dominion able to surmount the tallest star, and annex it to the bishopric of his conceit. And, what is remarkable, the smaller the sect, the plentier you find this sort of man, as if the Divine Providence purposely limited a stomach so gigantic to the meagerest possible pasture. But, on the whole, what sweetness has baptized the clerical function in the past! What fortitude, what self-denial, what patience, what labour in season and out of season, have been the heritage of the great mass of these men! What stores of learning they have accumulated; what splendid additions they have made to the best literature of every land; how they have enriched the sciences by their observation and studious inquiries; how they have kept the flame of patriotism aglow; how they have encouraged the generous ambition of youth, and directed it to worthy and useful ends; how they have dignified the family altar, and cherished the purity of woman, and diffused through society the charm of honest and gentle manners: all these things must be cordially acknowledged by every one competent to speak on

the question. Where would be the sense of ousting such a body of men, native, as it were, and to the manor born, inheriting a grace and dignity from their time-honoured places, embalmed in the kindly reverence and goodwill of the community, only for the purpose of introducing a new and undisciplined body, honest and well-intentioned, no doubt, and in many respects intellectually well qualified, but aggressive by the very necessity of their birth, contemptuous and insulting by the inseparable theory of their office?

All the world will bid God-speed to the new aspirants, provided they will honestly and modestly apply such teaching faculty as they possess to the dissemination of original truths on the subject of man's relation to God and his fellow-man. But if they are not content with this—if they immodestly claim to be a newer and more authentic priesthood as well,—if, instead of simply shedding new and grateful light on previously insoluble problems, *they seek a private end also, which is the exaltation of their own order in public regard, and to this end represent Baptism and the Lord's Supper to possess a different virtue, a diviner unction, under their administration than under that of the existing priesthood*: then the insulted common sense of the public will conclude that truth informed and urged by such a temper can hardly be worth a reasonable man's attention: and that if we can never attain to a *newness of spirit* in religious

matters without necessitating a corresponding *newness of letter* also, the sooner we abandon all hope of spiritual progress the better, and so get well rid for ever of the interminable quarrel and fatigue.

Ecclesiasticism is the curse of Christendom. That is to say, the habit of associating religion with ecclesiastical ends chiefly, is the main cause both of the low and selfish temper which its professed votaries exhibit, and of the contempt into which it has fallen among unthinking people. And I feel quite sure that no amount of doctrinal tinkering will avail to resuscitate it in popular regard, until it reveal itself as the power of a new and better life in man, enlarging the sympathies of its followers to the dimensions of humanity. It cannot be concealed, that our present pulpit influence, whether you call it new church or old church, breeds a style of character and manners extremely odious to men's cultivated instincts. No one, indeed, who is not implicated can be blind to the unlovely social fruit engendered by the pallid evangel which distils from most of our sectarian pulpits. While the mass of the attendants upon our pulpit ministrations, like the mass of mankind, cannot be swayed from the great tides of modesty and decorum which inflow from heaven, we are yet all of us familiar with those impressive instances of spiritual Pharisaism which do so much to give religion a fungus aspect in the eyes of the

world, and make it seem a mere excrescence upon the life. The instances, perhaps, are not extremely numerous, but the social blight they produce is to be measured more by their audacity than their number, of persons who seem to be completely shaped by the ecclesiastical gospel, men whose devoutness is only another word for self-confidence, or whose religion has so little interior life and avocation that it appears to be held in their hand like a truncheon, or kept on the tip of their tongue like a pellet, ready to be shot forth at every unwary passer-by. We are all of us familiar with men and women both, whose piety is so habitually aggressive and insulting, as to serve scarcely any other purpose than to give their neighbours a mortifying sense of their own inferiority. One continually meets persons of this sort from whose company he retires no less bruised and defrauded spiritually, than others do physically from the company of some renowned boxer. The mere surface-aspect of these athletic sanctities proclaims a conscious separation of themselves from the mass of mankind: their studious peculiarity of dress, their morose enjoyment of holidays, their sullen abstinence from innocent popular amusements, their costive sympathy with the gaiety of youth, their conventional speech, their discourteous avoidance of another's topics—their total mode, in short, of going out and coming in, of sitting down and rising up, are saturate with a self-consciousness so

dramatic and wearisome, as to make our plain agricultural Johns and our wholesome household Marias unspeakably aromatic and soothing. Certainly, if the true Gospel of the Divine Love were familiar to our pulpits, we should never see such arrogant characters as these decked out in heaven's livery. We should see them instantly arrayed, as within so without, in flagrant hostility to the Divine name.

Or, take a milder instance: there is my friend, for example, the Rev. Dr. X, who is an immense moral fact, and whom, accordingly, we are all eager to greet in the market-place and on the street. Yet I cannot help feeling somehow that my friend is by no means a commensurate spiritual fact. Intimate as I am with him, he forces upon me a constant dread that his life or aspiration is utterly bounded and fed by this nutrient sectarian estimation in which he is held. I chanced to be walking with him to church one morning last summer, when a strident and discursive newsboy, at a loss for a customer, proffered him the *Sunday Courier* and *Despatch*. I think I never observed a more intense chagrin than this little incident occasioned. "Whom do you take me for," shouted the holy man, "that you offer me that vile trash?" And he expressed his "wonder that God's wrath stayed itself, seeing His holy day and His worshipping people so continually profaned!"

I felt scandalized by this unrighteous rage; for

I could not see by what title the Doctor challenged Deity to intervene between him and this resounding vagabond. I grant you that it was properly a *nodus vindice dignus*, only let the policeman and not *Deus* be the *vindex*. For while the outward and moral difference which the policeman sees between the parties was very great, the spiritual difference, *which alone God sees*, seemed to me fairly inappreciable, so long as the Doctor proved himself capable of resenting so harmless an affront. Or, if any difference existed, I confess it appeared upon the side of young Barefoot, though I have no doubt that Barefoot, in all positive regards, was desolate enough spiritually also. My friend Dr. X evidently conceives that the elaboration of men like himself is the final purpose of God in creation ; otherwise, how could he have brought himself to express his arrogant wonder at the Divine patience towards an inferior class of men ? He manifestly considered that God stood personally well-affected towards him and me as going to church, and personally ill-affected towards this little Barefoot as not going ; and hence he felt himself warranted to vent any amount of unloving spite and indignation upon the “looped and windowed raggedness” which ducked and danced before us.

Surely the Doctor’s notion is profoundly unevangelical. He makes our relation to God strictly legal or outward, which is the relation of one independent person to another, and consequently

admits of any amount of spiritual conceit, or spiritual depression, congenial to the natural temperament of the worshipper. The Gospel, on the contrary, makes the relation completely inward and spiritual, as the relation of fountain and stream, of parent and child; and, hence, alike excludes either undue elation or undue dejection from our bosoms; for certainly it would be very ridiculous in the stream to grow vain of its own resources, and, above all, to fancy the fountain employed in admiring it, or indeed in doing any thing else but supply it. And it would argue great imbecility in the child—at least in a well-ordered society—to distrust its parents' bounty, or imagine any conflict between itself and the love which begets and nourishes it. In fact receptivity in the exact ratio of its truth or fulness, infallibly engenders humility, so that the highest angel or most *regenerate* person necessarily perceives the least *intrinsic* difference between himself and the lowest devil or most *degenerate* person; and is, consequently, exempt from the malignant invasion either of self-complacency or self-reproach.

No one confessed that beautiful Sunday morning with more unction than my friend, "that we are altogether gone astray, and there is no health in us." But that his total and intimate selfhood is of a piece, warp and woof, with that of the dilapidated urchin we encountered on our way to church,

is precisely what I fear the Doctor has never had the dimmest suspicion of. A faultless pitcher may contain very dirty water; and I have no doubt that our public and melodious confessions of sin very often mask a great deal of spiritual nastiness on the part of the confessor: that is to say, I am forced to conclude that these rhythmical and ritual confessions of sin proceed too commonly upon the tacit exemption of the sinner himself from its complicity—the sinner himself, in truth, deriving a tender and poetic grace meanwhile from the bare fact of confession: else why should we have such an immense amount of active and picturesque piety, with so slender an amount of unaffected human goodness? Why, in other words, should we have such a profuse and persistent Dominical confession of sin on the part of multitudes who seem secularly and habitually indifferent to the amendment of their lives? But, however this may be, I am quite sure that none of our ecclesiastical dignitaries the most exalted—were it foolish old Pio Nino himself—will ever cut a perceptible figure amongst the spirits of just men made perfect, unless they diligently learn the same justice, and, first of all, discard those rancorous and truculent dispositions which are begotten of the sectarian spirit, and which do more to debase our social atmosphere, or rather to keep it base, than all the remainder of “original sin” that has come down to us from Adam. God is a spirit of uni-

versal love, which degrades self-love to its feet or the lowest place; and all they, accordingly, who put self-love in the supreme or capital place, must always appear to heavenly intelligences as inverted men, or as having their heads where their feet and their feet where their heads ought to be; though of course the Divine clemency takes care that their own infatuated consciousness shall bear no witness of their melancholy and preposterous plight.

But let us go a little deeper into the subject. Let us ask the meaning of this great phenomenon which we call THE CHURCH; let us inquire in what necessity of the human soul it takes its rise, and to what rational issues it inevitably points. If we master these questions in some reasonable manner, we shall have no difficulty in estimating the distinctive genius of the New Church.

The distinction between Christianity and all other religions is, that while the latter exhibit an abundant doctrine of God as a terrible, mysterious, and lawless power, at an infinite remove from His creatures, and yet capable, on occasion, of the shabbiest personal friendships and enmities with them; the former alone gives us a doctrine of the LORD, that is to say, of GOD INCARNATE, or *God in unison with His creatures*. Christianity means nothing more nor less than the revelation of God in human conditions, or assuming the nature of His creature, in order to ensure that creature the benefits intended in his creation. Our word

“church” is derived from the Greek word *kuria-kon*, which again is derived from the Greek appellation of Christ, as *kurios*, Lord, and means *the Lord’s house*, or those in whom the Lord dwells—namely, the regenerate. Thus, the Church involves a doctrine entirely distinct from that which is ordinarily comprehended under the name of Natural Religion. It implies, in fact, that the relation between God and the soul is a supernatural relation, or that the life which God imparts to man is primarily a regenerate spiritual life, and only subordinately to that a natural one. In short, the Church affirms a descent of God to human conditions, or to the nature of His creature, in order to the redemption of the latter from the evils incident to his natural generation.

Now, unquestionably, if I were addressing an ordinary religionist, I should feel obliged to explain how it comes about that man’s highest felicity is contingent upon his regeneration, or why it is that He who creates man is bound by the very perfection of His own love to become his Redeemer and Saviour as well. And even as it is, I doubt not that it will greatly promote the service I would render you, if I pause upon this preliminary topic, and remind you of those laws of the Divine creation which suspend the creature’s felicity upon his redemption from the tyranny of his own nature, or, what is the same thing, upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If in dealing

with this large topic in the narrow space to which I am restricted, I seem to lisp and stammer, *you* at least will have no difficulty in ascribing the infirmity not to the intrinsic nature of the subject, which is identical with the highest reason, but wholly to my own inexperienced powers.

The primary law or necessity of creation is, that the creature shall not have life in himself—that is to say, shall not possess an absolute selfhood, but only a *quasi* or conditional one. This necessity inheres in creatureship. The creature, simply because he is a creature, can have no claim to an absolute, but only to a dependent existence. “The rule on the subject,” as I have elsewhere said, “may be stated thus: God is inhibited BY HIS OWN PERFECTION from giving absolute life to His creature, or, what is the same thing, from creating a being who shall be independent of Himself.” Because, inasmuch as He is life itself, or uncreated life, He cannot create anything which shall be life itself, or which shall live of itself, since this would be to create God, and so contradict His own uncreated being. Thus it follows, from God’s own uncreated perfection, that He can only create forms or subjects of life, to which forms or subjects He may indeed eternally *communicate* life by continually conjoining them more and more to Himself, but never surrender it, or give it to them outright. Were the creature anything more than a receptive form or subject of life, his creation

would imply the surrender of God's own being to him, and the consequent diminution to that extent of the Creator; in which case, a perfect creation, or one commensurate with the infinite Divine love and wisdom, must have proved equivalent to the utter eventual absorption and extinction of Deity.

It is clear, then, that God cannot create *life*, since that would be to create Himself, He being life itself. He creates only *forms* or *subjects* of life, in which He may dwell as in Himself, and to which therefore He may communicate His own eternal blessedness. The failure to make this discrimination is precisely what condemns the old theology and philosophy to eternal barrenness, and fills the human mind with fallacies that stifle all rational cosmology. Supposing that God creates life instead of mere forms or subjects or images of life, the old theology and philosophy envisage creation as an absolute or superficial fact, instead of a rational and progressive procedure on the part of God, involving the due adjustment of means to ends, and of both to effects. In this way they can only account for sin by supposing creation to have absolutely failed of its original purpose, and for redemption by supposing it to have been purely a remedial measure adapted to that exigency. And so it has come about that they affirm relations of essential independence between Creator and creature, and where they do not instil a spirit of Pharisaic pride and self-con-

ceit in their votaries, inspire a temper of abject and debasing servility.

The new and scientific theology explodes all this nonsense, by shewing that creation involves *primarily* a process of FORMATION. This is clearly set forth in the great scriptural allegory of creation: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth:" which being translated out of symbolic into scientific speech, means that God creates man both spiritual and natural, or gives being both to an internal and an external man; *heaven* in the language of correspondences signifying whatsoever is internal spiritual or superior, and *earth* whatsoever is external natural or inferior. "*And the earth was without form and void:*" that is to say, the natural or external man is essentially chaotic and disorderly, and requires to be educated or elaborated into form. The internal or spiritual man, being, like the involuntary system of the body, the *immediate* abode of Life or Deity, has no self-consciousness, and therefore generates no disease or disorder. But the natural or external man, being, like the voluntary system of the body, only the *mediate* abode of Life or Deity, is intensely self-conscious, and cannot fail therefore to generate all manner of disease and disorder, until this seeming and conscious self be brought into exact harmony with his real and unconscious one. To reduce the natural mind to order, or to exact harmony with his spiritual mind, is the

grand preliminary work of creation ; and accordingly the symbolic narrative goes on to describe, under the form of six successive natural days or periods, the gradual accomplishment of this work, and under that of the seventh day the perfect repose and delight which the Divine and creative spirit found in contemplating it. Here again the great spiritual truth flashes forth from the infirm letter : " And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work which He had CREATED TO MAKE." Our translators say, *created and made*, but they give the literal rendering in their margin, and it is decidedly preferable. To give man, the natural man, form then, is the prime necessity of creation : to give him a form properly or adequately receptive of the Divine life, is in fact to give him true being, and entitle him for the first time to call himself a creature of God. The Divine Love is creative, giving being to all things. The Divine Wisdom is formative, giving form or distinction to all things. It is only, therefore, in so far as the Divine Wisdom first reduces all created things to order and form, that the Divine Love can flow in and fill them with its immortal and ineffable delights.

But now it is clear to a moment's reflection, that the only form adequate to the reception of the Divine life is one which shall *appear* to live of itself. It cannot of course *really* live of itself,

because in that case, as we have seen, it would be God or uncreated life. But it must, nevertheless, *seem to do so*, or else fail in the most fundamental particular to be a fit subject of God, or to image His perfection; for the very perfection of God is that He is life in Himself, uncreated and unde-rived life; and He cannot be conjoined, therefore, with any merely mechanical forms of life, any such forms as refer their principle of action to an outward source. God's creature must be *apparently* autonomic or self-moved, or else violate the primary condition of the Divine conjunction with it; because the Creator is life in Himself, His only true or expressive image must seem also to be life in *himself*, under penalty of renouncing such imagery. Hence the world of *Nature*, a sphere of existence in which all things are conformed to the feeling or sense of the creature, and in which the Infinite Divine Truth submits to a transitory humiliation, or succumbs to specious and fallacious appearances. The natural world has always fulfilled this initiatory function; it has never been more than the necessary floor or basis of the spiritual creation. It is the world of form or appearance in contradistinction to substance, of seeming instead of being; the world in which the phenomenal dominates the real. All its laws are amply explicable—and explicable solely—on the hypothesis of its being a purely rudimentary and formative stage of human experience, of its being

as it were a seminary of the true and eternal creation. The end of the Divine Love in creation is the perfect conjunction of the creature with Himself, and as this end can be realized only in so far as the creature freely responds to it, so accordingly the Divine creation exacts a fundamental starting point in a world where the creature shall seem self-pronounced, or appear to himself endowed with being by virtue simply of his own nature. Thus, the natural or sensible plane of existence, a world conformed to the sense or feeling of the creature, is the needful husk and continent, so to speak, of the interior spiritual creation; and nothing can take place in the latter which is utterly devoid of root in the former. All this is only saying, in other words, that the Creator is bound by the very perfection of His love to give the creature selfhood, or, as it is commonly expressed, a finite existence; that is to say, a self-consciousness conditioned upon the equilibrium or balance of two opposing forces, good and evil, truth and falsity. In proportion as this balance becomes *permanently* realized, the creature will *feel* that he has life in himself, and so become a form receptive of the Divine communication, fit for the Divine inhabitation.

I say "*permanently* realized," and I emphasise the word designedly; for you will easily perceive, that the very nature of man—in so far as it is allowed free play—binds him incessantly to dis-

turb the existing balance of good and evil, and give the latter element preponderance. What is meant by the *nature* of man? what precise thing does that well-worn phrase signify? It signifies nothing more and nothing less than *what man is in himself* and apart from foreign influence.* Now, we have seen that in himself, or apart from the Divine conjunction and inhabitation, man is but a form, or appearance, or semblance, or image of life, his very substantial life itself being God. When I say, therefore, that "the nature of man, in so far as it is allowed free play, is sure to give evil the preponderance of good," I obviously mean that man being but the form or appearance of life, being, in fact, but the shadow of life, no sooner begins to esteem, to love, and to confide in himself supremely, than, like all persons who flee from substances and pursue shadows, he incontinently forsakes good, and rushes headlong into evil; for, evidently, there can be no other good for a creature—that is, nothing *more* promotes its life—than to love its Creator or the power which incessantly gives it being more than itself; and there can be no other evil for a creature—that is to say, nothing *less* promotes its life—than to love itself more than its Creator.

A *permanent* realization, then, of freedom, or of the equilibrium of good and evil, is what is necessary to base the communication of God's life in

* See Appendix, A.

man. But how shall this be attained? We have seen that the very nature of man inclines him to disturb this equilibrium, or bring himself under the bondage of the evil element. Clearly, then, whatsoever is natural to man—all that man is in himself strictly—not only gives him no help towards the permanent realization of his freedom, but actually defeats it. But if these things be so—*i. e.*, if, on the one hand, man is a proper subject of God only in so far as he is in freedom; and if, on the other hand, man's nature drive him to the destruction of this freedom; then of course it follows that God cannot make man a fitting subject of Himself, or endow him with true freedom, save in so far as He gives him redemption from the power of his own nature. *Thus, from the very necessity of the case, creation involves redemption; and until redemption is accomplished to its last fibre, or to the literal flesh and bones of humanity, it is premature to talk of creation being perfect.* Creation is perfected only by the deliverance of the creature from the dominion of his own nature—that is to say, by his being made a fitting subject of God; because, then, first the Divine love and wisdom have free access to, or conjunction with, him. Hence, you perceive the interior truth of the Christian doctrine of the LORD, and may easily apprehend the endless spiritual and scientific contents of the Christian revelation. For you will now understand *how* “by Him

God made the worlds, and how without Him there was nothing made that was made ;” and may intelligently read all those texts which ascribe equal honour to the Father and the Son, or represent the former committing all judgment and power and dominion to the latter.

This process of redemption, then, or this formative process, is the whole secret of creation, and explains all the phenomena of human history. Swedenborg shews us in those profound pages of his, that the Lord was always the inseparable life of the universe in internal or spiritual things, as he has now become its life in external or natural things. He denies that it was ever competent to the Divine Power to transfer His own life to another, or to make His creature life in himself; and demonstrates very clearly that creation is impossible, save upon the hypothesis of the creature being only a *form* or *subject* of life, in which case God is conjoined with him as the soul is conjoined with the body, and communicates life to him as the soul communicates life to the body. He denies that any angel is good in himself; on the contrary, he affirms that there is no angel in the most innocent of the abodes of bliss, who is not in himself or intrinsically of an exquisitely diabolic pattern; that is to say, who does not tend by overpowering natural gravitation to the lowest evils; and *that there is, consequently, no angel who is not incessantly redeemed by actual Divine power*

from swift destruction. Thus, no creature, angelic or human, was ever adequate by virtue of his natural selfhood, or what he is in himself and apart from foreign influence, to image the Divine perfection. Indeed, what we call the natural selfhood is only the mean or neutral term between two discordant extremes, and is incapable of becoming anything save by the reconciliation of those extremes. It is not any immediate product of the Divine Power, but descends mediately from certain spiritual substances in which that power primarily resides. God's creature is primarily—that is, interiorly—a form of affection and thought, and as affection and thought are essentially free or perish when constrained, so of course the spiritual creation potentially involves in its component forms the utmost conceivable variety consistent with the unity of its creative source; that is to say, it potentially involves the bipolarity of angel and devil, or heaven and hell, with all the modification included in those extremes. Thus, the natural selfhood is but the unit of these warring forces, and is utterly devoid of character, therefore, save in so far as it gives one or other of them preponderance. But as it is sure when left to itself to give the evil element preponderance, so its intrinsic character is always evil, or fails to present a just image of the Divine perfection, and can only be brought to do so by the extrinsic energy of redemption.

All nature, indeed, is but the echo of the Divine footsteps in interior realms of creation. Space, with its immensities, only reflects the Infinite Love which unites such widely remote or mutually repellent forms of affection as angel and devil. And time, with its changes, only reflects the procession of Infinite Wisdom through the endless series of intelligences that unite the highest seraph to the lowest clod. But as redemption is the grand method or law of creation, so order, progress, liberty—whatever name you may please to give the great life which animates history—becomes the method of Nature. The universe of space and time becomes adorned with its many-hued and miraculous life only because redemption is the inmost secret of creation, or because an Infinite Wisdom shapes the outgoing of an Infinite Love. Thus, all that we call history, that is to say, all those facts which go to constitute Church and State, or to make up the ecclesiastical and political life of man, refer themselves to interior supernatural causes, and attest the redemptive operation of God in the soul of man, or the persistent effort of the Divine Love to bring its creature into responsive form. Church and State are ultimate natural effects of these interior Divine ways, and by penetrating their crust accordingly, we touch the secret of human destiny. The Church especially embodies the dynamics—if I may so speak—of the relation between God and

the soul ; while the political State merely exhibits the cheerful dawn of that endless Sabbath or rest which this relation is destined eventually to attain in the scientific society, fellowship or brotherhood of men. In confining our attention, therefore, mainly to the testimony of the Church, we shall be sure not to miss any considerable feature of the Truth. The eternal truth is that God creates man, that infinite Good gives him being. But then inasmuch as infinite Good consists only with humility, and as humility comes about only by the elimination of pride, it is evident that man can never attain to the knowledge of this Good, and the consequent consciousness of his creature-ship, unless he see it wrought out in the intelligible forms of his own experience, or find it in other words completely ultimated in his own history. Now Church and State satisfy this demand. They derive all their shape from the great truth of man's Divine origin and destiny. The Church first exhibits man humbled, putting away his pride and self love ; and then the political State in which it merges, exhibits him crowned, or exalted consequently to the dominion of the earth. But let us confine our attention, for convenience sake, mainly to the Church. The Church then considered as an historic institution, owes all its shape to the fact that the Divine redemption was bound to find its most lustrous natural ultimatum and revelation in a conventionally degraded human form.

For the true glory of the Divine creation reveals itself in the life of the humblest of men, of one who was profoundly destitute of whatsoever the world deems righteousness. Every man in history but Jesus of Nazareth has had some pet self-righteousness, giving him a heart of hope towards God. He has been Greek or Roman, Jew or Mahommedan, Catholic or Protestant, Episcopalian or Presbyterian, Baptist or Methodist: that is to say, in some literal form or other he has diligently kept what men call the divine law, and thereby placed what he fondly deems a very wide gulf between himself and the rest of mankind. Jesus was profoundly destitute of this odious spirit. He had so little accredited patriotism in fact, that he incessantly offended his nation by slighting the distinction between Jew and Gentile; and so little conventional religion, that he incessantly disgusted scribe and Pharisee, priest and Levite, by accepting the homage of notorious sinners, and promising these a prior place to those in the kingdom of heaven. In short, his bosom was the shrine of a universal love and fellowship, a love and fellowship as wide as the universe of creation, and therefore unmistakeably divine. But, without the Church, this great truth could never have got to light, nor this great life found an adequate theatre of action. Thus, the Church has been, as it were, a scientific necessity of the human mind, in order to shew that the Divine power in creation then first be-

comes equal to the behests of the Divine love, when it finds itself embodied in one who loves his neighbour more than himself, and mankind more than his country : *albeit that self and that country should have been identified by every sacredest scripture and tradition with an exclusive divine regard.* In short, the Church has existed only to bear testimony to the supreme truth of the redemption which takes effect in the Christ : first, BY KEEPING ALIVE THE PROPHECY AND PROMISE OF HIS COMING, *until the event should take place ;* and then BY KEEPING ALIVE THE MEMORY OF THAT EVENT, *until such time as its bursting and blissful meaning could be discerned in rational light.*

The history of the Church, then, is the true history of creation, as embodying that redemptive process by which man has been incessantly moulding into the Divine image, or becoming reduced to the Divine subjection. The whole aim and effort of the Divine Providence in human history hitherto has been to reduce the natural mind to order, or to make the natural man spontaneously subject to its own great designs. The world, or what is the same thing, the mind of man, has been hitherto in a state of formation merely, and creation, as we have seen, so far from ever having been perfect, is still only inchoate. Man still prefers to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and consequently banishes himself the whilst from the tree of life : that is to say, he listens well-pleased to his

senses (scripturally, *the serpent*), affirming that he has life in himself, and he is consequently inflated with the thought of becoming as God, or being the source of his own good and evil. If in this state of mind God permitted him to go on unrebuked (or, as the figurative language of Genesis runs, allowed him *to put forth his hand and eat of the tree of life*), it is evident that he would become an every-way odious form of pride and self-will, eternally incapable of a sympathetic conjunction with God. Accordingly, God endows him with conscience, or the sentiment of responsibility (in scriptural phrase, *sends him forth from Eden*), and devolves upon this flaming vicegerent the task of humbling his conceit, and bringing him at last into the obedience of the truth. Thus, the grand infirmity of human nature is pride, or the sentiment of independence. To deliver it from this infirmity has been the constant aim of the Divine Wisdom; and the successive churches which have marked the course of human history are so many faithful records of the success which has attended the Divine enterprise.

In looking at the history of the Church, then, we shall utterly miss even an approximately just perception of its meaning and influence, unless we first of all accurately conceive the great life with which it is identical. That life is of course wholly invisible to sense, because consisting as it does in a most real redemption of man out of the bondage

of evil into the eternal subjection of good, it can only be transacted in the depths of the soul; but it is not on that account incapable of a scientific statement. On the contrary, I am persuaded that it is intensely capable of being defined to the reason; that like all the highest facts of being indeed it is eminently and essentially rational. And, believing this, I believe also that the time has come for demonstrating the truth upon the subject; I believe, in fact, that no higher service can be done the human mind at this day than to secularize the idea of the Divine life in man, or to divest it of its theologic swaddling clothes, and shew it henceforth in its true scientific lineaments and proportions.

What, then, is the Lord's life in man? Roundly described, it is a life of eternal deliverance out of evil, and of eternal insertion into good. This life is going on in man's soul, without one moment's cessation night nor day, and with all the energy of God's unspeakable love, so that no man on earth, no angel in heaven, and no devil in hell is for one moment unaffected by it either in character or circumstances, however unconscious he may for the most part be of its operation. Let me be perfectly understood. I say that creation is an essentially redemptive process, or that God of necessity can give us being only in so far as He gives us deliverance from the dominion of our own nature. If hereupon you ask me what I mean by the words

“essentially” and “of necessity” in this connexion, I reply, that I use the words in their strictest sense, and that I mean thereby to indicate the exact nature of the case, or to suggest the proper limits of the question ; in short, I mean to allege that, *in the very nature of things*, all true creation involves or consists in a process of redemption, and that God truly gives me being consequently only in so far as He elevates me above my own nature, and conjoins me with Himself. For consider the literal import of the word creation : it is the giving being to that which in itself is destitute of being. Now, this is not a mechanical process. God does not give being to another in the way of an outward transfer, as by imparting a portion of His own substance to another, and to that extent diminishing Himself. Every such notion of course stultifies itself, not only because it implies a transfer of personality, but because it supposes the creature, whose very creation is in question, already created in order to the transfer being made. Clearly, then, creation is not mechanical, is not the power of an outward life simply ; and yet an equally insurmountable objection exists, *primâ facie*, to our considering it a dynamical process, or the power of an inward life ; for what creature can fitly image God, or be worthy of the Divine perfection ? In other words, how shall that which is essentially created bear any ratio or likeness to that which is essentially

uncreated? You perceive that the contrast is greater than that between night and day. The Creator is underived life, the creature derived. The one is essential freedom, the other essential dependence. What harmony, what conjunction, can possibly exist then between Creator and creature? The creature is completely destitute of selfhood, and without selfhood how can he possibly reflect the Divine Infinitude, or prove a fitting subject of God? He is nothing that he does not derive from God, how therefore shall he adequately image that underived perfection? Thus, the fundamental condition of a dynamical creation is vacated, if you deny the creature selfhood; while, on the other hand, it is obviously impossible to affirm selfhood of that which in its own nature is derived and dependent. Accordingly, unless we can extricate ourselves from this dilemma, we must renounce the entire problem of creation as intrinsically insoluble.

It is precisely here—that is, as furnishing this needful extrication—that I am only too happy to acknowledge my profound intellectual obligation to Swedenborg. Swedenborg shews me that the selfhood in man is a continual grant or communication to him from the LORD; that it has only a *quasi* or seeming and not an absolute existence, *being incessantly imparted to him only in order to its serving as the requisite basis for the Divine conjunction*. He tells us that selfhood is permitted

us only because we could not be fitting subjects of the Divine life without it: it is, so to speak, *a mere loan in the interests exclusively of that higher and eternal subjectivity*, and is consequently without one jot of absolute truth or validity. He takes endless pains to iterate instruction on this point, for it is obviously fundamental to every right apprehension of Christianity, or the doctrine of the LORD. He everywhere affirms that the selfhood in man is an incessant gift on God's part, in order to man's conjunction with Him, and everywhere denies it absolute or unconditional truth. Here, in fact, according to Swedenborg, is the very origin and source of evil, consisting in the viewing that as absolute which is only conditional. The selfhood is a mere loan or permission to the creature, with a view to an ulterior and superior Divine end. If, then, the creature give it an absolute validity, or incline his understanding unreservedly to its testimonies, it will be sure to play the devil with him by reversing the real truth of things, or making his true good appear evil, and his true evil good. Accordingly, every man whose understanding is purely natural—that is to say, whose intelligence is instructed simply by sense or feeling, believes in himself first, and in God quite subsequently and subordinately. He may carefully disguise the truth of the case, or prevent it coming forth into overt expression: he may, indeed, habitually and melodiously confess himself a very

great sinner, and warmly extol the Divine clemency towards him ; but all this is the effect of culture or discipline attesting the operation of conscience, whilst at bottom or in heart he all the while loves himself supremely, and abhors the very thought of God. It cannot be otherwise, until human nature itself become regenerate. So long as I limit my belief by my knowledge, or conceive of spiritual realities under sensible tuition, my heart necessarily remains at enmity with God ; for my senses declare me absolute, or cause me to feel as if life were in myself. If, then, my reason affirm this declaration, or my belief do not by some means become elevated above my knowledge, it is clear that I shall love and cherish my *self* with a very infallible devotion, and of necessity love or hate every other self in the exact ratio of its benignity or malignity to mine. Especially shall I dread and hate a reputedly infinite self, or one which claims an absolute creative right in me ; and there is no end to the odious and servile forms of sycophantic homage in which that bosom dread and hatred will seek to hide themselves from sight.

Redemption, then, is the fundamental necessity of creation. The creature must be delivered from the dominion of his own nature, in order to his becoming a true child of God. A new mind, a new heart, a new nature—for these words all mean the same thing—must be Divinely given

him before he can fitly image the uncreated perfection, or become capable of conjunction with God. And as the infirmity or corruption of man's nature consists in its giving self-love the predominance over brotherly love, or arraying him in antagonism with his kind, so of course the new nature is bound to reverse the relation by giving brotherly love the superior place, and self-love the inferior; or, what is the same thing, by exhibiting him no longer in antagonism with his kind, but in the strictest unity and fellowship. In short, the new and divinely given life of man is SOCIAL, consisting in the gradual rise and prevalence of the sentiment of equality or fellowship among men, and the consequent eventual consumption and extinction of the sentiment of selfishness.

Thus we have at length reached a rational definition of the nature of the Divine life in man, having divested it of its theologic swaddling clothes, and displayed it in its exact scientific proportions; and with this clue in our hand we shall have little difficulty either in estimating the varying phases of that great historic phenomenon called the Church, or in appreciating the intimate bearing it exerts upon that other great historic phenomenon called the State, or yet again, in determining the inevitable influence they both together exert upon the development of human society or fellowship.

If we consider the language of the symbolic

Genesis, we shall discover that every process of the Divine Spirit implies a twofold or contrasted movement, one, descending or redemptive, announced by "evening;" the other, ascending or creative, announced by "morning." The *evening* and the *morning* are invariably described as going to constitute each successive Divine day or work. Judging naturally, or, in Pauline language, carnally, one would say that creation must begin from the morning, but in that case how could we dispose of the evening? To suppose an evening *following* the radiant morning of the Divine creation, would be to suppose that creation coming to an end; than which no supposition could be more undivine and disastrous: and yet to suppose a morning undefined or uncontrasted by an evening either before or after it, is a manifest absurdity. The inspired symbol solves the difficulty, by putting the evening *before* the morning, thus making the latter introductory only to an endless beatific day whose sun shall never go down. This, as we have seen, is truly the Divine method of creation,—namely, to begin by redeeming the creature from his own nature or what he is in himself, and to end by perfectly conjoining him with the infinite and eternal Good.

Accordingly, in looking at history, we must expect to see the evolution of human destiny obediently shaping itself to the law of this contrasted movement: or, in more explicit language,

we must expect to see the human mind gradually emerge out of a twilight consciousness of Divine things into the cloudless solar light of Truth. Because history is but the tally, so to speak, of redemption, we must expect to find it conformed to the law of its origin, or demand in the historic realm also that the *evening* shall go before the morning. That is to say, we shall expect to see the ecclesiastical, or purely formative state of man, coming to its close in his political State, which is the dawn of his social, orderly, and Divinely permanent state. In one word, we shall expect to see the Church infallibly engendering and inaugurating the State, with all that the State implies or inducts. I repeat, that we are analogically bound to demand this, for the Church expresses the redemptive dealings of God with human nature; and the State sums up the orderly and blissful issues to which all these dealings rigidly tend. God first redeems man from the dominion of his own nature, and then conjoins him with Himself. Creation, as we have seen, is impossible on any other terms. And all nature, as I have already said, but echoes the law. The very genesis of the universe, in fact, involves this twofold or contrasted movement, and provides for a circulation in spiral form between the two, by means of its two universal points of contact or transition, one descending named birth, the other ascending named death. The highest heavens, according to

Swedenborg, continually *descend* in forms of *natural* innocence, or in all those things which pertain to the infantile age of man, to the period of parturition, birth, and nourishment: and the lowest hells, on the other hand, continually *ascend* in forms of *spiritual* innocence, or in all that chastened wisdom which accompanies old age, and indicates the decease of our natural pride and vigour. Thus the highest heavens and the profoundest hells essentially conspire to the perfection of nature, or the normal development of human life; and nothing was ever wanting to bring that perfect and normal development about, but the advent of some sufficiently humble person who, by co-ordinating hell to heaven in his own bosom, and both to the uses of his own natural life, should give this essential con-spiration actual and eternal embodiment.

Now what I say is, that the Church and the State are the mere historic symbols or equivalents of this universal Divine operation. They say in the realm of history, or of man's associated experience, precisely what evening and morning say in the realm of sense, or birth and death in that of consciousness, namely: that God is perpetually redeeming man from his own nature, and perpetually conjoining him with Himself. In dealing scientifically therefore with the relations of the Church to the State, we must be careful to hold the ecclesiastical evolution of

the human mind in the same fixed attitude of subordination to its political and social evolution, as natural birth or generation bears to death or spiritual *re-generation*, or as evening bears to morning. As the tender and saintly evening with its hosts of heavenly lamps but serves to illustrate the drear and dismal night which otherwise would engulf us, and thus keeps hope alive to the coming of that regal and gorgeous to-morrow which shall blot all its glories from sight, or drink their pale splendours up in its own broader effulgence: so the Church with all the eminent stars and constellations that have gemmed its firmament, has only served to reveal by contrast the sombre abysses of human nature, and thus to stimulate hope and desire for the coming of that incarnate Sun of Righteousness, which should eventually dispel all its darkness, and make its waste and solitary places blossom like the rose.

Before the Lord's coming in the flesh, evening shed its dim religious light athwart the chaos of the human mind: that is to say, the Church was paramount in human affairs. Since His coming, the brilliant and breezy morning has succeeded to the dark unwholesome night: that is to say, the political State has been struggling into clear self-consciousness. The reason why the old or ecclesiastical evolution of the human mind is likened to the evening, is, because in that condition the relation between Creator and creature is only most

dimly visible, being disclosed by the pale moonlight of Truth, rather than the rich warm sunshine of Good. Truth is but the form or image of Good, and will be perfect or imperfect according to the mirror upon which it is projected. Now, man's natural understanding, as we have seen, is a most inadequate medium for the transmission of Divine Truth: because man is, naturally, a form of self-love, and an intelligence enlightened by self-love must necessarily reflect the Divine love, which is the opposite of self-love, in a completely inverted manner. The Divine Love is creative, and acts as we have seen only by communicating itself with all its powers and felicities to others; and to communicate what is one's own to others, in order to make those others eternally powerful and blessed, is utterly to deny self-love, or at all events to affirm its strict subjection to universal love. But the natural understanding degrades the Divine Truth, because the natural heart degrades the Divine Love by exhibiting self-love in envenomed antagonism with universal love.

Pride is the mother evil of human nature, or the source of all its infirmities. What is the pedigree of Pride? Its sire is sense or feeling, (symbolically, *the old serpent or devil*): and its dam is the natural freedom or selfhood which God communicates to man as the requisite ground or basis of his spiritual conjunction with him: (in symbolic literature this selfhood is named *Eve, mother of*

all living.) Inasmuch as we are intrinsically void of life, and God is the all of life in Himself, it is obvious that we come into life or being only by virtue of God communicating HIMSELF to us. This communication is what gives rise to the great and otherwise inexplicable mystery of Consciousness. We become self-conscious only by virtue of God dwelling in us as in Himself. This communication or indwelling is so sincere and cordial and unstinted on God's part, that we instinctively absorb Him as it were in ourselves, or feel His constant presence as so much *intrinsic* freedom or selfhood, as so much life, power, dignity, inseparable from our natural bodies, and consequently identify all our bliss with those bodies. Thus, *naturally*, we subject God to ourselves, to our carnal pomp and vanity, and unless our judgment be instructed by something above sense or feeling, that is, by a supernatural revelation, we should become as blind in understanding as we are proud in heart, and so forfeit all possibility of conjunction with God.

Now, the Church is simply the embodiment of this revelation, and an infinite mischief accrues if you give it any other mission, or attempt to exalt it into a Divine finality. It is most strictly a means to an end infinitely higher than itself: it is a preliminary shaping or moulding of the human mind towards that end: and if you consider it anything more, you are bound to bring up, logi-

cally, in all the obscenities of Paganism, or else in the childish frivolities of Romish and Puseyite worship, which is only Paganism deprived of its soul, and condemned to a cadaverous immortality in so-called Christian temples. The Church never was, is not, and never will be a fulfilment of the Divine end in creation, until it perfectly merge in the political State to which it has been introductory, or rather until both Church and State alike merge and disappear in the scientific society—fellowship—brotherhood—equality—of universal man. As the evening and the morning alike go to constitute the Divine day, so Church and State both alike go to constitute human society, which is the great end of God's dealings with human nature. The aged ecclesiastical life of man can no more help expiring in the vigorous embraces of his political life, than night can help expiring in the roseate arms of morning: and his political life can no more help leading on to his social and Divinely permanent life, than that roseate morning can help leading on to perfect day.

I have said on a former page that both Church and State owed their visible shape to the fact that they are embodiments in the scientific sphere of that great redemptive and creative work which the Divine Love is ceaselessly carrying on in the soul of universal man. For example, the Church becomes visible in its Priest, as the State does in its King. Now what I say is, that the sacerdotal office and the

regal office are nothing more nor less than immature natural symbols of that Divine life in man which is only to be worthily expressed in the scientific sentiment of human society or fellowship. They are nature's crude and unlearned effort to utter the mystery with which she is big, but which is not yet ripe for scientific deliverance. For human society is then in its infantile beginnings only; the sentiment of equality or fellowship has scarcely any recognition beyond the limits of the family or tribe: and the Divine life in man is consequently obliged to mask itself in these typical functions of priesthood and royalty. The sanctity of the Priest represents the infinite Divine Love which is silently shaping man's nature to its own subjection; and the power of the King, who is invariably consecrated by the Priest, represents the infinite Divine Wisdom which is also secretly operative in man's nature, and which being vivified by Love, will eventually exalt him to universal dominion.

We see therefore at a glance why this Church and State, why this typical Priest and King, find at once their literal abolition and spiritual fulfilment in the Christ. For the Christ reveals the completion of that Divine work in humanity of which these things were only the remote promise and prophecy. What is that Divine work? It is the deliverance of man from the dominion of his own nature, and the consequent conjoining him

immortally with Himself. Man is wholly unconscious of the origin of his selfhood or freedom: in symbolic language, *the Lord God causes a deep sleep to fall on Adam, while He takes from him a rib, and of this makes a woman and brings her to the man*: he has no idea that it is an incessant Divine communication to him: on the contrary, he conceives it to be inherent in his natural organization, and as all his felicity is contingent upon it, he of necessity prizes the organization which seems its source with an altogether insane love. Hence the ardent fires of self-love, hence the zealous discrimination of *meum* and *tuum*, or the ensanguined efforts I make to subject *your* self or *his* self to *my* self. How, then, shall God redeem man from this insanity? Evidently and only *by so subjugating self-love to neighbourly love in the universal or unconscious mind of man, as to make all the influx which descends from that mind into the individual or conscious mind attest such subjugation, and so render the latter spontaneously subject to God.* This is what God, by the very necessity of His Creator-ship, is incessantly doing in the spiritual world, or the universal mind of man, namely, subjugating evil to good, self-love to brotherly love; and the time must infallibly come therefore in the experience of the creature when this work shall be perfected, or when the natural selfhood, being the outgrowth of the contrariety between good and evil, shall reflect the perfect subjugation of the

latter to the former, and so fall at once into the Divine subjection. Now Christ in the historic sphere is the revelation of this perfected work of God. His birth and death, His ineffable sufferings and glorification, reveal the triumphant Divine subjugation of evil to good or hell to heaven in the universal human mind. His birth from a virgin symbolizes the great and eternal truth that God alone vivifies the selfhood of man, or brings about man's deliverance through himself: His unspeakable humiliation and horror and anguish of soul, typify the enormous resistance which the Divine redeeming Love encounters from self-love in that selfhood as naturally organized: His death, resurrection, and glorification, typify the complete Divine emancipation which that selfhood nevertheless undergoes from its natural thralldom or limitation, and its consequent endless union with infinite good.

It is inconceivable, therefore, that Christ should have cared to re-organize the lapsed and typical mummeries of the old or literal dispensation. On the contrary, the whole tendency of His influence was to liberate the truth from its literal bondage, and give it spiritual or universal expansion. The Christian truth imports that all men are to be made priests and kings unto God. For the Christian truth is that God has assumed our nature, that our nature is taken into the alliance of infinite Love and Wisdom, and hence of course every

partaker of that nature must eventually radiate the Divine perfection. This is what is implied when it is said that "his flesh saw no corruption." His flesh saw no corruption because in Him self-love or hell becomes *spontaneously* submissive to brotherly love or heaven, and brotherly love or heaven *spontaneously* submissive to the Divine. This is the eternal truth never revealed but in the Christ, that what is evil in human nature *spontaneously* submits to what is good, and what is good *spontaneously* submits to the Divine. It is a truth which inheres in the very fact of creation, or grows out of the deeper truth that God constitutes the very life or selfhood of man. If man were an absolute being independent of God, *i.e.*, if his selfhood inhered in his physical constitution, then of course it would be preposterous to expect any improvement in him. He would be a fixed quantity, unimpressible to all the solicitations, however potent and subtle, of the Divine Spirit, and his universe would prove a sty so stagnant and loathsome, that the human imagination can find no similitudes to paint it. But as it is, God creates man, or gives him being every instant. Infinite Love and Wisdom are the total and sole life of man; and, therefore, *when his spontaneous or free development takes place*, whatsoever is evil in him or opposed to Love, must freely yield to what is good or accordant with it: and all that is false in him or opposed to Wisdom, must freely yield to

what is true or accordant with it. There are three stages of human development, whether of the race or the individual: 1. The instinctual or animal; 2. The voluntary or moral; 3. The spontaneous or spiritual. The child is *instinctually* good, or good because he cannot help it. This obviously is not a state of real freedom or selfhood, any more than is that of the animal, and requires no comment.

The adult is *voluntarily* good, or good by the abnegation of evil. This is as yet only a state of *quasi* freedom, or apparent selfhood, because at bottom the man is really constrained to act as he does by supernatural power, the whole force of his nature impelling him the other way. This is the only freedom or selfhood known to the old Church. It is merely a preparation for a higher development than itself.

The old man is *spontaneously* good, that is to say, no longer by the putting away of evil, but by the hearty love of good. Evil no longer presents any temptation, for nature has run its course in him, and left him ripe in the wisdom that flows from experience. He is good therefore not as the infant is good, or from angelic influx simply; nor yet as the adult man is good, from a desire to commend himself to God, or a fear to offend Him; but from a cordial love of good for its own sake, and a consequent cordial contempt of any blessing or banning which does not flow exclusively from

its presence or absence. This is a state of real or Divine freedom in man, because his natural selfhood is no longer insubmissive to the Divine, but on the contrary, completely united with it.

To sum up: the earliest or infantile stage of human development is that in which the common or natural element dominates the private or individual one; the second or moral stage is that in which the private or individual element dominates the common or natural one; the third or spontaneous stage is that in which neither element dominates the other, but each is Divinely co-ordinated and adjusted to the other. To say the same thing less abstractly: in the instinctual or animal and infantile development of man, nature controls the selfhood; the body controls the soul; the flesh controls the spirit. In the voluntary or moral and adult stage, the selfhood controls the nature; the soul controls the body; the spirit controls the flesh. In the spontaneous, spiritual and mature stage, all controversy between these things has become Divinely reconciled, the body, flesh, or nature being by its own momentum reduced to the cordial allegiance of the higher and Diviner element.

The spontaneous stage of human development then is the perfected stage, or that of man's perfect subjection to Divine Love. Man is now in finished form, and the Divine Love and Wisdom can flow into him without measure. And it is this per-

fectured form of man which is revealed in the Christ, and would have been utterly inconceivable without such revelation. Of course then the Christian truth, as I have said, is quite incompatible with the attribution of any permanent sanctity to the literal priest or king. For that truth imports THE UNION OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURES, *and the consequent inward anointing of all men with the Divine perfection and power.* And he must be a very infatuated mortal who should aspire to teach, or to rule over, such subjects. The entire practical or historic influence of Christianity has gone in fact to the liberalizing of the priestly and regal office, or to the diffusing of them among the masses of the people. That emancipation from the bondage of Authority which is now so universal and irresistible a bent of the human mind, and which in its ecclesiastical aspect names itself *Protestantism*, and in its political *Democracy*, what is it but a proof that the spiritual development of Christianity is utterly fatal to all fixed ecclesiastical or political corporations, and tolerates nothing short of the universal society, fellowship or equality of men? In Protestantism the Church as a visible power fully disowns its authority any longer to guide human thought. In Democracy the State as a visible power disowns its authority any longer to guide human action. Protestantism is nothing more nor less than a proclamation of individual freedom in the spiritual sphere. Democracy is a

proclamation of the same freedom in the material sphere. The former absolves man from all allegiance short of God in religious things. The latter absolves him from all allegiance short of humanity in secular things. The Church accordingly, as an authoritative Divine institution, disappears from Protestant countries, being spiritually diffused among the whole body of Christians. And the State as an authoritative Divine institution, with power to bind the popular will, disappears from Democratic countries, being equally diffused among the whole body of citizens. Thus it is the pretension of Protestantism to bring mankind into direct contact with God, the Church which formerly mediated between the two being now by joint consent dropped out. And it is the pretension of Democracy to have brought man into direct contact with humanity, the State which once mediated between man and man being henceforth by joint consent also dropped out.

Obviously then we are at a crisis in human affairs. Mankind is manifestly entering upon the period of its majority, and the law of its action must be found no longer in the precepts of tutors and governors, but in its own ripened intelligence. The old paternal mansion with its wholesome austerities is fairly left behind, and the strapping youth with pack on shoulders is cast upon the world to seek his own fortune. Church and State, which have hitherto been his father and mother,

which have been the soul and body of his past culture and discipline, can do nothing more for him. They have exhausted all their skill in bringing him up to this critical age, and they consequently open wide their doors, bidding him speed hereafter upon his spiritual and material destiny, according to the blessing of heaven upon his own manful courage and ability.

Now this demeanour on the part of Church and State would be totally without excuse, save upon the understanding that science is now fully adequate to carry out and complete the career they have inaugurated. The pretension of Protestantism to ally us directly with God, so passing by the mediation of the Church, is wholly fallacious, unless spiritual laws, or the laws which regulate the intercourse of the soul with God, are capable of a scientific statement and apprehension. And the pretension of Democracy to ally us directly with Humanity, or our fellow-man, so passing by the intervention of the State, would also be wholly fallacious, unless social laws, or the laws which regulate human fellowship, were also similarly capable of a scientific form and body. It is absurd for Protestantism to pronounce itself an advance upon Romanism, if it give its followers nothing in exchange for the goods they have relinquished. The Church separated us from God only by the breadth of its own sacraments and priesthood; that is to say, it allowed us access by their

mediation. Protestantism in, as I conceive very properly, rejecting this boon, and in promising us direct or immediate access to God, did not mean to delude us. It does not say when it finds us looking back to the *arva beata* of our spiritual infancy, or to the sacramental grace and sacerdotal absolution we have left behind, that it has nothing to give in lieu of these specious blessings. On the contrary, it ensures us the direct illumination and immediate comfort of the Holy Spirit. And of course this direct illumination and comfort, inasmuch as they disavow any ecclesiastical conduit or channel, claim a normal and regulated descent to man, or obey certain *laws* of communication: which *laws*, like all others, legitimately commend themselves to scientific cognizance.

In like manner precisely it is absurd for Democracy to pronounce itself an advance upon Monarchy or Aristocracy, if it give the citizen nothing in exchange for the order and protection he has relinquished. Monarchy and Aristocracy gave us a *quasi* and conventional fellowship with our kind, or separated us from our fellows only by the breadth of their own necessities, the breadth of what they call the State. Democracy in, as I conceive very properly, rejecting this boon, and promising us the direct and immediate fellowship of our kind, did not mean to deceive us. It does not say when it finds us reverting to the days that are past, the days of kingship and coercion, of

social order enforced by the bayonet, and civic honesty guaranteed by the prison, that it has nothing better to give us than these shabby blessings. It ensures us, on the contrary, a full fellowship with our kind, or an unforced social order among men, and an honesty and good faith which shall permit prisons and bayonets to crumble into the disregarded dust. And this perfect fellowship of man with man, since it disclaims any definite political channel, must be contingent for its manifestation upon certain laws which are a legitimate quest of the human understanding, and fall within the scope of its science.

The Church and the State then, under their present Protestant and Democratic administration, perfectly concur in putting human destiny upon a scientific footing, or committing our spiritual and secular interests to the sole *regime* of Intelligence. Intelligence is henceforth the crowned King of men; as the goodness which sanctifies it is their anointed Priest.

Our leading Protestants and Democrats are no doubt wholly unconscious of the strictly societary or humanitarian bearings of our present ecclesiastical and political *regime*. They fancy that Protestantism and Democracy are permanent or final evolutions of the religious and social sentiment, and are seriously incommoded by the suggestion of their rigidly solvent and transitional efficacy. They are unwilling to regard these things as mere

menstrua through which the Church and the State undergo a refining process, and gradually attain a sublimer manifestation; on the contrary, they would gladly circumscribe the redeeming love to the arena of their indefinite and wide-weltering dimensions. Neither Protestantism nor Democracy as yet perceives that it is only a providential half-way house, or road-side inn, to bait the weary pilgrim on his journey from the old and worn-out East to the new and blossoming West. And we consequently see many a traveller seduced by its foaming tankards, and its cozy fireside, and its neat-handed Phillis, into regarding the inn as the true goal of his pilgrimage, and sinking into an abject loiterer and craven. But these, after all, are the sottish sort chiefly, and will not be missed when the muster-roll of the mighty host is called in the grey of the inevitable Morning.

The fundamental principle of Protestantism is the right of private judgment in spiritual things, as that of Democracy is the right of private judgment in civil things. In whose behalf are these rights asserted? Protestantism does not claim spiritual freedom for one person more than another. Democracy does not claim civil freedom for one person more than another. They both alike urge a claim in behalf of universal man. Protestantism pronounces *every man* spiritually free, and Democracy pronounces *every man* civilly free, *by right of his birth as man*. Freedom is his birth-

right as man, not as Roman or Lutheran, not as Greek or Arabian, not as English or American. Hence it is clear that the Church, according to the Protestant interpretation of it, and the State according to the Democratic interpretation of it, have a world-wide scope, *or assert the interests of universal man*, and consequently cannot be realized until some doctrine be developed adequate to cover on the one hand the entire field of man's relations to God, and on the other the entire field of his relations to his fellow-man. Both Protestantism and Democracy assert a *universal* truth: the one, that man is related to God simply as man, or *spiritually* and no longer ecclesiastically; the other, that he is related to his fellow-man simply as man, or *socially* and no longer politically. Protestantism is the practical vastation of the Church, considered as an Ecclesiasticism. Democracy is the practical vastation of the State, considered as a Police. Luther was only a consummate John the Baptist, proclaiming God's ripening judgment upon the Church, and baptizing the nations henceforth with spirit instead of water. And Napoleon was only a grander Vespasian overturning its subject State in the interests of universal Humanity.

I repeat, that we can find no satisfactory explanation of these later developments of history, or of this recent expansion on the part both of priest and king, or Church and State, aside from the

influence of Christianity. Christianity, or the doctrine of *the Divine vivification of human nature*, is the intimate pervasive substance and meaning of all history. All nature and history had been unconsciously teeming with Divine throes, until the blessed babe of Bethlehem sounded the hour of deliverance. By all the incidents of His life and death, by His completely subjecting self-love and the love of country in His own bosom, *even when those loves were authenticated by every seemingly Divine sanction*, to the love of universal man, He communicated an upward impulse to human history which has infallibly issued in all those current phenomena which we have just been signalizing, and which, while they betoken the utter inertness of our ecclesiastical and political *institutions* over the human mind, at the same time suggest the indefinite enlargement of the human mind itself.

The truth of Christ's divinity has been hitherto found susceptible only of ecclesiastical uses. It has served to discriminate the orthodox doctrine of the Church from all its falsifications, and in this way no doubt has powerfully promoted the interests of spiritual order, the order of the human mind. But within the bounds of the natural world it has as yet only served the purpose of a broom to sweep the Church clean of the cobwebs of heresy; and the consequence is, that we are all very slow to conceive of its ever bearing any

larger or more generous fruit. But I, for my own part, am persuaded differently. I am persuaded that whether we believe or disbelieve, this great truth is operative under all our political and civil as well as ecclesiastical history, and forms indeed the *primum mobile* of that immense *social* agitation which is destined never to cease, but only to grow until the law of human fellowship, or of the exact equality of man with man, becomes finally realized throughout the earth.

Of course nothing can be easier for you than to give all this exposition of Christian truth a bad name, by calling it Socialism, and so absolving yourself from all further obligation to consider it. I have myself no objection to any reproachful name it may please you to bestow upon me, because I very well know that the name is only a negative acknowledgment, on your part, of the overpowering force my doctrine bears to your understanding. If you could answer or refute the doctrine, you would gladly do so, and never waste your time in calling it bad names. Besides, though Socialism is not Christianity, it is a very decided symptom of its living and active presence. Socialism means the doctrine of St. Simon, Fourier, Cabet; means some specific theory or other in regard to the *organization* of society in institutions. But Christianity means the social spirit itself, means the spirit of human love and brotherhood, the spirit of universal fellowship or

equality which is yet to reign on the earth, and cover it with the manifest splendour of God. Fourier, St. Simon, and the rest, no doubt deserve well for their attempts to embody this spirit, but we must not judge of the spirit itself from their conception of it. Human society or fellowship has indeed always been a latent force in history, like steam in water, or electricity in the atmosphere, and will always be inviting its Fultons and Franklins therefore to put it in proper harness, in order to secure certain admirable fruits or uses. But we should be very foolish to estimate the great force itself by the mechanical embodiment which these Fultons and Franklins give it: above all things to suppose it identical with such embodiment. I for my part am led to think, that the Socialists proper exhibit a very faulty conception of society. They all suppose it to be a product of purely *natural* laws. Thus their whole thought becomes absorbed in the invention of suitable gearing for society, while the crying want of the world is to be convinced of the bare *possibility* of society itself. Fourier, for example, talks of organizing society as glibly as you would talk of organizing a military company. *But where is the society which is to be organized?* The very possibility of human society yet remains to be demonstrated. Society does not mean a mere mass of men of one nativity, living under the same political constitution. It does not mean the French

people, or the English people, or the people of any other nation. It means neither more nor less than the FELLOWSHIP OR EQUALITY of man with man: not by any means the *natural* fellowship, but the scientific fellowship, or a fellowship which is EXCLUSIVELY THE FRUIT AND OUTGROWTH OF HISTORY, INSTEAD OF ITS STARTING POINT. The Socialist conceives that society is the natural tendency of humanity, and that it might have been perfect at the beginning of history, had the leaders of mankind only had sufficient wisdom to organize it. The starting point of Socialism, in other words, is the goodness of human nature, and hence it inevitably violates the religious instinct in man, by denying the truth of Revelation. For Revelation affirms the intrinsic evil of human nature—theologically, the fall of man—and a consequent redemption on the part of God. I feel bound accordingly to look upon human society, human fellowship, human equality—for all these names indicate one and the same reality—not as a normal phenomenon of human nature, but only as the fruit of a most real Divine operation in humanity. That is to say, I believe that the redemption accomplished in the Christ so availed to the subjugation of evil in the spiritual world, or its eternal subjection to good, that the natural life of man, which is exclusively an outgrowth of the commerce between good and evil, cannot fail ultimately and perfectly to reflect such subjection,

and consequently to exhibit the intensest practical accord of duty and interest, or brotherly love and self-love. And an accord of this nature is precisely what is meant by human society or fellowship.

To my apprehension, then, human society, considered as the grand result and culmination of man's scientific progress, is a strict necessity of our relation to God—is an inevitable outbirth of the redemption which was effected by His incarnation and glorification in Jesus Christ. And as the human mind is the only theatre of that redemption, we must look there also to see the first exhibition of its proper fruits. That is to say, we must expect human society, fellowship, equality, to be admitted as a truth of reason, before it becomes demonstrated as an historical fact. It must, in other words, be acknowledged by the scientific intellect before it can become adequately organized in institutions. And the scientific intellect, according to my conception of the case, must ere long prove docile to the instruction afforded on this point by Christianity, which, when viewed by the light of spiritual laws, is the only authentic revelation of the Divine relations to man. Neither Fourier nor Comte assigns any scientific worth to Revelation. Fourier is doubtless the more reverential intellect of the two, but even he, with all his goodwill, does no justice to the question of the origin of the social instinct. He makes it date

exclusively from the constitution of human nature, and this in spite of the ages of infernal discord and inequality between man and man, which all history avouches. Surely, if human fellowship had been an outgrowth of human nature, we should have seen before this time some irrepressible exhibitions of it. Human nature has had full play under every stimulant of plenty and want, or of pleasure and pain, and yet it has never exhibited man as doing to others what he would have others do to himself. On the contrary, every man who has ever fulfilled the royal law in the most infinitesimal measure, knows perfectly well that he has done so without any help from his nature, that is to say, by the inspiration of a distinctly supernatural motive. Since the world has stood no man ever performed an act of love to his brother without an implication of the sentiment of duty, or what is the same thing, a recognition of some superior obligation to that of his nature. How childish, therefore, to talk of society as the outgrowth of *natural* laws, or to regard it in any of its stages as anything short of a supernatural phenomenon. Natural laws might account for human society, provided you mean by the word nothing more than simple brute gregariousness, based upon the play of natural affinities among its subjects: though I am by no means certain even of this. But clearly the phenomenon of human society means no such thing as this. It means the fel-

lowship of those who are in the intensest spiritual antagonism, or who, in all interior respects, are as wide apart as heaven and hell. It means the scientific fusion or unity of characters as mutually repugnant as oil and vinegar. The technical Socialist looks upon human nature as intrinsically undepraved, and insists that its aberrations argue only the influence of fallacious doctrines and of vicious circumstances. With him, consequently, nothing is needed for the perfect evolution of society but the melioration of our existing doctrines and circumstances. I am far from undervaluing these advantages. I am quite sure that they are both imperatively demanded by the necessities of the human race. But I am equally far from imagining that society has needed no deeper inauguration than these things afford. I prefer to accept facts as they offer, and I find myself thus compelled to infer that human nature is intrinsically very vicious. It seems to me to be the palpable lesson both of history and of current observation, that men are naturally inclined to a supreme self-love; some in coarser, some in subtler forms it is true, but all with like reality. And I cannot believe, therefore, that under the inspiration of this principle, they could ever *naturally* tend to fellowship. They must naturally tend to consume and plunder each other—the strong the less strong, and the weak the more weak. For self-love is obviously a dividing, not a

uniting force; and whatever tendencies to fellowship men exhibit accordingly, logically confess themselves the effect of supernatural causes.

I have no intellectual sympathy then with the socialists properly so called, or those who hold that Society is a purely *natural* phenomenon, requiring nothing but the operation of natural laws to account for it: nor yet have I any intellectual sympathy with Comte. Comte takes no deeper view of the origin of society than the ordinary socialist. They are both alike, indeed, destitute of the slightest insight into the constitution of society. If the Socialist give you an ingenious and striking *aperçu* of future social harmonies, this after all is only dealing with the visible form of society, and affords no glimpse of its interior constitution. The question for this time is, What constitutes society or holds it together? What guarantee have we that it shall not perish? When we ask a similar question in reference to the human body—when we ask what constitutes the body or gives it permanence—no one would suppose that he answered the question by enumerating ever so learnedly the various members and organs of the body. These things are all taken for granted in the body, and when you say human body you implicitly say them. The soul alone constitutes the body or holds it together, so that the moment the soul is withdrawn the body falls into dissolution. So when you say human society, you implicitly say all the harmo-

nies which are possibly involved in the relations of man to man. And what you want to know is what gives being to these harmonies—what gives them permanence—what prevents their turning into a mere illusion of the heart, and thus leaving us more wretched in the end than we had been in the beginning. These are the questions which Comte cannot answer—which he does not even hear the echo of—and which yet *must* be answered before the mass of mankind will begin to think of Socialism save as a pleasant dream between sleep and waking. Comte supposes human society to be a purely physical phenomenon, or to be subject exclusively to natural laws. Find out the laws of human nature, he says, and you have all the knowledge necessary to constitute human society. In every sphere organization, with Comte, is equivalent to life. It is only another form of the inevitable French conception, which places the *opus* above the *materies* on which it is displayed, which postpones the substance to the form, or makes the cookery more than the meat. The grovelling aspect which the problem wears to Comte's mind is very well illustrated by the hope he has lately evinced that the Russian despot might be flattered into a practical inauguration of his schemes.

Comte's great merit consists in his having been the first scientific intellect adequately to invoke attention to the strictly progressive nature of science. And his permanent demerit consists in

his having supposed himself capable of properly estimating this fact and assigning the laws of its evolution. His attention as a student has been arrested by the discovery that the sciences appear to be intimately concatenated, or to be developed one from another, in a regular and necessary sequence; and he very sensibly set himself to inquiring—*whereto shall these things grow?* The Church supplied him no prognostic. Philosophy was even less suggestive. “Let us, therefore,” he said, “push them both out of our way, and see what horizon will then expand before us. If science is continually travelling from outer to inner conquests—if the law of its advance is continually from simpler to more complex fields of existence—the day must assuredly come, when, if Theology and Philosophy do not block the way, it will lay its hand upon man, and upon all the phenomena of his associated life and action. Theology and Philosophy now operate as an impediment to this final evolution of science. They have a previous occupancy of the human territory, and must, therefore, be dispossessed before science can come to her own. They willingly allow science *carte blanche* as to the lower fields of existence, but they vehemently forbid her intrusion into the domain of human life, and scoff at the idea of human action becoming matter of rigid prediction. My first labour, therefore, must be to dethrone Theology and Philosophy, in order to win science a fair

field, and the formula of the threefold evolution of the human understanding must be my weapon for doing this." I cannot but believe that if Comte had exhibited less intellectual narrowness here, his claims upon our gratitude would have been much more real than they actually are. This incapacity on his part to comprehend the *rôle* of the existing Theology and Philosophy, did nothing but confirm his Materialist tendencies and render him hopelessly atheistic. Identifying religion with the Theology of the day, or rather of a past day, he felt himself bound by the unscientific cast of that Theology, to proclaim an essential and permanent hostility between science and religion, and bade every vulgar sciolist insult, on his authority, the sacredest hope of the soul. A larger or spiritual apprehension of his theme would have qualified this antagonism, and would have saved him, moreover, from the melancholy antics he is now practising *both as a theologian and philosopher*.

For, alas for human frailty! Comte had no sooner demonstrated the utter evanishment of the theologic and metaphysic eras to make room for that of Positivism, than—ere the plaudits of his admirers had ceased to vibrate upon the air, or the caps they flung up had returned to earth—he set about constructing not merely a brand-new theology, but a brand-new religion as well, with creed and catechism, fast and festival, duly appointed and established; and not merely a brand-new re-

ligion either, but a brand new Deity also—a Deity so preposterous that only the rigidly “scientific intellect” which begot Him could fail to be ashamed of Him, for He is compounded of the abstract and metaphysic unity of all God’s creatures, being in fact the aggregated scum or feculence of the universal finite experience. So charmed is our new and scientific Stylites with this achievement—so intent is he upon spreading the serene and majestic tail of his own extraordinary merits before the eyes of the world—that he not only with more than French egotism, minutely and gravely depicts the starting-point of the new cultus, in a certain erotic hallucination with which he was inspired by a certain Clotilde de Veaux, but with more than French bombast also takes every occasion publicly to subscribe himself AUGUSTE COMTE, *Fondateur de la religion de l’Humanité*. I know not how it strikes you, but I am so persuaded, for my part, of the intimate relation between character and destiny, that I cannot help believing that any average old woman, who has only wit enough devoutly to read her Testament, and honestly to prosecute her hebdomadal avocations of clear-starching and crimping, will, fifty years hence, that is, in fairer fields of being, immeasurably outrank this philosopher in that very knowledge, as to which alone he is now so ponderously her superior.

Comte’s unquestionable merit, then, is that he

has brought into adequate light this grand historic secret of the absolute growth of the natural mind of the race. There can be no doubt that history discloses a continual orderly advance of the human mind in nature, and points with no indecisive finger to a time when every sphere of associated human life shall be rigidly subject to the *régime* of law. Comte's mistake is in regarding this historic tendency as a proper outgrowth of what he calls natural laws. Here it is that he puts himself in flagrant antagonism with the highest instincts of the race. He scoffs at the bare mention of causation as involving the conception of supernatural power, and utterly rules it out of scientific cognizance. But this only betrays the shallow nature of the man, and proves how easily he, individually, can mistake mere intellectual vastation for culture and fertility. He thinks that the chief obstacle to the progress of the scientific understanding consists in the influence of the great theologic dogma of the Fall? Why? Because "this fundamental dogma, which all religions reproduce under some form or other, leads to the direct and necessary inference that man's social deterioration must keep pace with the growth of civilization." Undoubtedly, all religions claiming the dignity of a Revelation involve the idea of a Fall; but they do not therefore, as Comte alleges, necessarily imply the endless deterioration of man, for the simple reason that they all, with more or less clearness, also

affirm a Divine deliverance from that catastrophe. The Fall is there to be sure, but the redemption never fails to ensue. The Christian religion especially, means nothing else than this redemption; and I really think that Comte, since he was going to set up such an egregious religion of his own, might have condescended to an accurate estimate of the system he was going to displace, at least. The founder of Christianity was, to be sure, a much humbler individual in his own estimation than the "*fondateur de la religion de l'Humanité*;" but the latter is scarcely authorized entirely to overlook him. Indeed, I have a very clear presentiment, for my own part, that he will continue to exert an active influence upon human progress long after the illustrious *fondateur* shall have himself subsided into a very modest repute; the repute, possibly, of a man whose great abilities might have conferred unmixed blessing upon humanity had they not been signally vitiated by the association of an immeasurable and childish vanity.

Thus I have no philosophic sympathy with the technical Socialist. I have no doubt that any amount of crudity and nonsense may be dug out from his leading text-books, because these books have been for the most part written by men of one idea, or men whose thought has been confined only to the most material and superficial aspects of human nature. But I have a profound belief in Christianity, which shows us that the Divine

Love is intimately busy with the secular life of man, and intends, in the fulness of time, to bring it into ample and exact harmony with his hidden and celestial life. As this latter life is wholly energized by charity, as the bliss of heaven springs from the genuine sentiment of brotherhood which binds all its members into unity, so accordingly our secular life can only be brought into harmony with it by the gradual rise and prevalence of the social sentiment on earth. This latter sentiment—the sentiment of human fellowship—is not the effect of individual culture; it is an accompaniment of the advance of science, and unquestionably betokens a new natural development of man. It is manifesting itself on every hand, and bids fair, before very long, to sweep away every vestige of the old artificial manners which savours of diabolism. The new wine must infallibly burst all the really *old* bottles; in other words, *every institution which is built upon the essential inequality or difference of mankind is bound to disappear*. All the European institutions are of this complexion, more or less. Indeed, all merely political life has been of this character, and is therefore menaced with more or less modification. But our bottles are not old. On the contrary, they are quite new, and capable of containing the new wine, let it ferment as it will; for our institutions have no sanction but the popular welfare, and are sure to expand to every need of the popular life.

The true life of God in man then, the life which is now claiming man's subjection, and which is therefore elevating him more and more out of nature's thralldom, is, I do not hesitate to say, the life of society—a life of the strictest fellowship with our kind—a life which springs from the growing sentiment of human equality. This is that new life of man upon earth which is getting itself recognized in all our progressive legislation, but which so few of the European legislators seem to have any conception of. European institutions are based upon the sentiment not of human equality, but of human difference. They divide men into classes—a higher and lower class, or a dominant and subject one—and it is manifestly absurd to expect any true social development within such conditions. England seems to be completely fossilized by this monstrous fallacy. A friend of mine, and a man of distinction, told me one day of a lady, one of his acquaintance, feeling obliged to take her boy from an excellent school, at which he had been attending for a couple of years, because the master had been indiscreet enough to take in a confectioner's son. So also the head of a young lady's school in his neighbourhood had felt called upon to reject the application of a rich draper, who desired to place his daughter under her charge, because, as she said, a compliance with it would ruin her school. These are straws, but they shew the drift of things there better than

larger incidents. They show that the life of England—attached, servilely attached as it is to its institutions—is dwindling away to nothing, and that unless some trump awaken it in time from its lethargy, it must fall an easy and infallible prey to younger blood. For the sadness of the thing is, that even liberal-minded men there justify these monstrous wrongs. I have talked with popular clergymen and literateurs on the subject, and they seem to have no idea of any organic change in the social constitution of England being desirable. They say that if you once begin to look in that direction, you cannot stop short of Socialism. And Socialism is the bug-a-boo which now reigns supreme over all the adult noodledom of Europe.

But let me return to my theme. My intelligence, instructed by Christianity, recognizes an *a priori* obligation to expect just such a Providential elevation of the earthly life of man as *Carey** and *Bastiat*, for example, declare to be actually taking place. For these men shew what the undeniable fact of social progress proves,—that there has been a constant practical tendency in history to co-ordinate the conflicting demands of self-love and brotherly love, or, what in this case is equivalent, to reduce the former to the latter's obedience. All social advance implies this tendency. Civilization would have been utterly impossible without it. Society—which means the fellowship

* See Appendix, B.

or equality of man with man—is conditioned for its very beginnings upon some faint subordination of the selfish principle to that of benevolence; and all subsequent social enlargement is due only to an increase of such subordination. Bastiat detects the active operation of a sentiment in humanity, to which, by way of discriminating it from self-love on one hand, and neighborly love on the other, he gives the name of “*personal interest*.” Carey, no doubt, may have helped him here originally; but he has so splendidly vindicated the historic reality of the sentiment and its beneficent operation, as to entitle himself to the praise of a master. This sentiment of “personal interest,” though based in part upon self-love, is by no means identical with it, because it is also based in great part upon brotherly love. In fact, what Bastiat calls “personal interest,” is an actual compromise of these warring loves, or amounts to a practical reconciliation of their conflicting claims; for self-love, when unchecked by benevolence, bids every one seek his private interest without regard to his neighbour, and hence, if left to its own momentum, would be sure to defeat the very possibility of human society. History shows, accordingly, a slow, but sure subjugation of the evil principle to the good in the human mind, or exhibits the constant efficacy of what Bastiat calls “personal interest” in promoting the march of human fellowship. Take any New York

millionaire you please; let him be inwardly as hard as the nether mill-stone if you will; yet you will find no man more alive to the advantages of social order. His very selfishness binds him to social allegiance, since it is only in promoting the social welfare that he finds its surest gratification. The truth is that crime and vice no longer pay. With the growing subtlety of our police resources, every rogue becomes infallibly spotted in a very brief time; and such is the increased sensibility of the social conscience that the devotees of vice no longer live out half their ordinary time. Thus self-love itself is teaching its subjects to be, before all things, good citizens; so that, look where you will through the length and breadth of the land, you will find the social sentiment in genial and lively exercise even in bosoms where, otherwise, you would very much fear the angels might have hard work to hold their own.

How do you account for these magnificent facts? In short, how do you at all account for the social instinct in man, and the enormous advances it has already made toward an adequate realization? Self-love is not a whit better in itself than it ever was, and neighbourly love has not a whit more power in itself to subdue it. Yet it is so clear as to force itself even upon political economists, that history is practically exhibiting an ever-advancing subjugation of self-love to benevolence, or interest to duty, so that a widening conviction exists in the

human bosom that knavery is always folly, and that one best serves himself by first serving his neighbour. What explains this enormous revolution? Nothing, I am persuaded, but the great fact of the Incarnation—nothing but the sublime and inspiring truth of the Divine NATURAL Humanity, which entitles us to expect that human nature, though of itself most abject rubbish, shall yet be built and animated by God's informing spirit into a temple so spotless and fair, as not only to beget a new and more living worship than has yet been known on earth, BUT ALSO TO FURNISH THE BASIS OF A NEW CELESTIAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MAN, *in comparison with which the old heavens will be no more worthy to come into mind.*

Christianity has long fed the souls of the humble with angels' food. It has long been the all-sufficient argument of gentleness, patience, tenderness to every thoughtful heart, because it has disclosed a life beyond the grave in which the wicked, whatever be his inclination, shall have no power to trouble, and in which the weary, however huge his burden, shall attain to perfect rest. But Christianity has the promise of *this* life as well as that which is to come, and all signs shew that the day is near when this promise shall be completely fulfilled. Two nations have always been struggling in her womb—two manner of people were to be separated from her bowels—one a plain race

dwelling in tents, regarding themselves as pilgrims upon earth, and aspiring to a heavenly country : that is to say, an internal or spiritual man in whom brotherly love rules : the other cunning hunters, men of the field, hirsute and sensual, aspiring to realize the infinite Divine Good even in the natural body : that is to say, an external natural man in whom self-love rules. The latter race is the first born chronologically, or in the creature's experience, and its destiny has always been to serve the younger race and promote its nobler necessities. But we read that when Jacob was supremely blessed of his father Isaac, Esau was also promised the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven from above, and an ultimate emancipation from his brother's yoke. The son of the bondmaid shall never indeed inherit with the son of the free woman ; but when the latter has attained to his desires, what shall hinder the Divine Love making the former also the father of mighty nations, and giving him an earthly dominion of endless peace and order ?

I have a friend in this city, a man of the sunniest natural disposition, and of the ripest intellectual culture, who frequently insists that the true reading of the copy-book morality is not, *Be virtuous and you will be happy*, but *Be happy and you will be virtuous*. Without pretending to decide this question, I am at least free to say, that I have long felt it to be more consonant to my con-

ceptions of the Divine goodness, to look upon the precepts of the Divine law, *thou shalt not kill*, and so forth, as purely *promissory* rather than *mandatory*; to regard them rather as so many gracious promises on the part of God towards His struggling and tempted progeny, than as so many stern and pitiless commands. I have felt bound, moreover, to take this view by two weighty exegetical considerations. One is, that these reputed commands are preceded by certain other commands to love God with all the heart, and to reverence one's parents: and neither love nor reverence can properly be commanded, because their life is purely spontaneous. Evidently, then, these first injunctions can only be promissory, can only be viewed as a promise on the part of God to His people, that He would yet place them under such an experience of His bounty, as that they should not fail to love Him with all their heart, and honour all those who were in any way mediatory to that bounty. But if these first precepts claim this promissory character, I have no right to look upon the others in a different light, but must view them as simply so many promises on God's part that He will yet deliver His creature from theft, adultery, murder, and every other evil incident to his present social immaturity.

The second exegetical necessity is decisive. For I find that these reputed commands of God are addressed not to the mere natural mind of man,

but to the renewed natural mind; that is to say, not to Tom, Dick, and Harry, or the mere sons of earth who are yet fighting for a bare foothold upon its surface, but to an EMANCIPATED PEOPLE, who had just been delivered out of Egyptian bondage and wilderness perils, *in short out of all inimical conditions whatever*, and were about to be placed in a land flowing with milk and honey, where every want of their souls and bodies should be met by God's plenary satisfactions. I can easily understand the relevancy of such a code to such a people, since their relation to the giver is the sure guarantee of its fulfilment, turning all its seemingly minatory commands into so many rainbow hues of golden promise. But viewed in the ordinary light, that is as mere commands addressed to men still struggling with the adversities of nature and society, and making no account of their temptations, the code seems unfeeling and insulting, seems utterly unworthy of God. For as all my instincts of the Divine perfection forbid me to regard God as desiring to reap where He has not sown, I cannot believe Him capable of asking anything from His creature which He has not first given the creature both the ability and the disposition to perform. Thus I conclude that as the law bears the unvarying preface, "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage," so no person has any right to regard himself as a properly obe-

dient subject of that law until he feel himself free of every temptation which the world, the flesh, and the devil, combine to impose upon him, until he finds himself, in other words, in that new heaven and earth which God, by the ministry of science, is now rapidly constructing for us. In fine, I believe that the Law and the Prophets bear reference exclusively to the Christ, or Divine NATURAL Humanity; and that viewed apart from this reference, they are not merely impertinent to a private regard, but are actually incredible and absurd.

This great hope of an orderly life of man in nature, a life replete with all Divine peace and blessing, has been dawning in the human mind, ever since the Church definitively merged in the State at the Reformation. No attentive student of history can fail to see that a new mind or intelligence has been begotten in man since that lustrous epoch; that men have begun since that event to believe in the Gospel promises of "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good pleasure in men," as approaching an actual fulfilment. The morning is not more truly an advance upon the night, than is the political conscience of man an advance upon his ecclesiastical one. The strictly ecclesiastical conscience presents man as naturally alienated from God, and forbids him access save by the mediation of baptisms and sacrifices, implying the purification and subjugation of his natural affections. The Church as discriminated from the

State, always contemplates man as in natural bondage, as still in that purely sensuous and irrational state of mind which permits him to deem himself an absolute existence, and fills him with all manner of pride and self-seeking. Of course, therefore, its entire worship and discipline are most divinely shaped to the rebuke or mortification of this intense carnality, as hindering the worshipper's conjunction with the infinite Divine Good: for what sympathy has that Good with any form of selfishness? In fact, the total ceremonial of the Jewish worship was meant to be nothing more nor less than a perpetual remembrancer of sin on the part of the worshipper; who, accordingly, could make no mistake so fatal as to feel himself justified by that which was intended only for his condemnation, or to suppose himself brought near to God by all that ceremonial apparatus which was destined to demonstrate his hopeless remoteness. No doubt his possession of the Divine law was an outward or seeming distinction from other people; but it was a distinction to be coveted only in so far as the spirit of the law became realized; that is, in so far as the Jew should grow in humility and fellowship with all other men. The law in all its appointments was only an argument of perpetual humility to its subject, was only a schoolmaster to indoctrinate him in the lesson of his own natural destitution of life or righteousness, and so shut him up to the hope of that infinite and immortal righteous-

ness which was to come from God alone. For if the worshipper were already righteous and acceptable in the Divine sight, why should he have been made to undergo this incessant and tiresome mediation of baptisms and bloody sacrifices?

Hence you always find God revealed as in intimate spiritual hostility towards every church or people with whom His name is visibly associated. He consents apparently to write His name upon any special people only with a view to abase its pride or carnal self-sufficiency; only with a view to bring out by the contrast of its abject narrowness and selfishness, the worth of that spirit of universal love and fellowship which He aims to beget in all men. The total pith and authenticity of every Divine institution—sacerdotal or sacramental—upon earth, lie in its purely figurative and promissory character, in its being a germ or emblem of better things to come. For abundant illustration on this point read the history of God's "chosen people" in the Old Testament, and observe how, when Jesus came offering in the entire tenor of His own life a full revelation of the Divine Spirit, He provoked the measureless scorn of that self-righteous and unloving race. In fact, as we very well know, he was obliged to hide the purely spiritual aims of His mission even from His own kindly but unintelligent followers, was obliged to wrap it up in apologue and parable and mystic action, and finally bequeath it to the world's me-

mory in the disguise of two ceremonial rites, baptism and the eucharist, under the penalty of having it utterly obliterated and forgotten.

These two carnal ordinances snatched by the Lord's hand from the wreck of the Jewish worship, and modified into memorials of His own blessed Spirit, the spirit of universal human love and fellowship, became the germ eventually of the political development of Christendom, or of those institutions which express the awakening Divine good pleasure in the natural man. The Jewish Church, as we have seen, because its entire design was to symbolize the alienation of the natural mind from God, and to give it access only by cleansings and sacrifices, could boast no permanent priesthood nor royalty. The Jewish priest and Jewish king were merely a mock or temporary priest and king, because they represented, the one the entirely fallacious sanctity that accrues to man from any outward differences between him and other men, the other the entirely contemptible power which is enthroned by such sanctity. Thus their own intrinsic limitations bound them to disappear, as soon as that natural alienation of man from God on which they were built, should be Divinely overcome. But the Christian dispensation in discarding all baptisms and sacrifices, gives man direct or immediate access to God, and hence inducts a priesthood and royalty which shall never pass away, but which shall become co-extensive

and co-eternal with his renewed nature. It is true that the *old Church* has always been identified with two rites or ceremonies, *baptism* and *the holy supper*: but it is never to be forgotten for a moment that these rites are of a rigidly and inseparably MEMORIAL nature, designed to keep alive the name and memory of an absent friend till his promised return, and therefore, without one particle of vital force beyond any ordinary tombstone. They do not exert one jot of justifying or purifying efficacy. They are mere memorials or remembrancers of a Divine purgation for ever perfectly accomplished in the Christ, and hence their reverential observance is totally incompatible with anything of a servile spirit on the part of the worshipper, with anything but a spirit of filial joy and devotion. He who regards baptism and the eucharist as anything more than *memorials* of a Divine work effected in human nature, or as having some present cleansing and sacrificial efficacy, might quite as well spend his time in attitudinizing before Mumbo Jumbo; for he is doing nothing but hardening himself in spiritual conceit and fanaticism. These rites are two most expressive memorials and symbols of a purifying and redeeming chemistry which God is perpetually operating in the depths of human nature, or the spiritual world; and for any man to attempt translating them out of this symbolic and memorial character, into an original vital transaction between himself and God, argues

a fanatical pride and self-complacency unmatched by anything short of Judæa.

The modern ecclesiasticism (meaning by that term both the so-called old Church and new Church), does not understand these things so, and hence is sure of a growing popular contempt. The common mind of Christendom has always regarded baptism and the eucharist simply as memorials of Christ's finished work, and, in spite of all that an ambitious priesthood could do to reorganize a Christian Judaism, has gone manfully forward to claim the fulness of the Divine benediction even upon this present life. The true Christian Priest, he who really avouches the reconciliation of the Divine and human natures in the Christ, most logically inducts and inaugurates the Christian King, or him who, on the basis of such reconciliation, claims the loving service and homage of external nature. But the true Christian priesthood is most strictly a universal priesthood, inducting a universal royalty, or giving universal man the dominion of nature. For the promise is, that in Christ, or the Divine NATURAL Humanity, all men shall be made kings and priests unto God. The old Church, in claiming to be a special priesthood, and to induct only a special royalty, confesses itself recreant to its own profession. It obstinately refuses to enact this consecration of universal man; it obstinately persists in postponing the divine blessing to a future life,

and relegating man's filial joy and devotion exclusively to the developments of some far-off supra-mundane sphere ; and it righteously invites, therefore, the contempt and indignation of the scientific mind. It has always been a sham priesthood inducting a sham royalty, not the royalty of universal man, but that of special families or persons, whose partial interests compel them afterwards to betray and crush it. Thus, practically, the technical State has stifled the technical Church in modern Christendom ; or Kingcraft is everywhere seen putting an end to the corrupt Priestcraft which originally gave it life. Some faint murmur of battle is still heard perhaps : the Church now and then, under some mighty conjuration, exhibits a galvanic spasm of life : but the State is actually master of the field throughout Christendom, and still tolerates the Church only for its own perishing ends. Of course when the Church, as a visible hierarchy, finally disappears from the earth which it defames and defaces, the State, as a visible Police, must also disappear with it, for they are strictly correlative institutions. But they will both disappear only to be reproduced in that NEW Church and State, or in that Diviner SANCTITY and POWER which shall be commensurate with man's renovated nature, and become visible in every blessed feature and fruit of universal human fellowship.

Now what I prize in Swedenborg is that his

whole labour is given to the extrication of the Divine and universal spirit, which is latent in these carnal ordinances of the Christian Church. He shews that these ordinances are utterly worthless save for their spiritual contents, and vindicates their existence and observance solely on the ground of this mystic significance. For as nature is the exclusive seminary of the spiritual world, as no conscious spiritual existence takes place without a previous natural germination, so, consequently, had it not been for this provisional and symbolical embodiment of the Christian truth afforded by the rites in question, the spirit of Christ must have forever lacked all natural germ or body; must have for ever remained unincarnate : for that spirit was so infinitely above all that was then recognized as morality, that we are in fact only now beginning to be dimly apprehensive of it. If then the mind of man even now remains so dull and inapprehensive, how should Christ have communicated the grand mystery of the Divine redemption of nature at that early day, in any other than a figurative or symbolic manner? Clearly the thing was impossible, without fatally disgusting even the most adhesive of his few and perplexed disciples. Either the great arcanum must have remained wholly untaught, the very effort being abandoned ; or else it must be taught in accommodation to the mental stature of the race, that is, carnally or figuratively. Accordingly, Christ in-

stituted the two rites of baptism and the supper, one symbolizing the negative or initiatory side of the regenerative process, the other the positive and consummate side of it. Baptism was designed as a sign or memorial of the elimination or putting away of natural evils requisite in regeneration: and the eucharist, or the mystical feeding on the body and blood of the Lord, as a sign or memorial of the influx of Divine goodness and truth consequent upon such elimination. They were both alike mere signs of this regenerative process, mere *memorials* of it, destined to survive until his mystical second coming; that is, until he should come in the power of his Spirit, to claim the spiritual allegiance of his worshipper, or, what is the same thing, take possession of his heart and understanding.

Now, what must we say of a self-styled new Church which, in face of all these palpable facts, *and while avowedly acknowledging the spiritual advent of the Christ*, does not hesitate to identify that advent with the origination of a new and senseless ecclesiasticism, so converting the literal symbols or memorials of Christ's truth into its eternal substance? This is literally, as little children say, *to play* New Jerusalem: and very shabby and discreditable play it is. The sole glory of the Christian sacraments lies not in themselves, but in their memorial significance. When, therefore, that thing which these sacraments signify is,

by your own avowal, come, why seek to keep up the accomplished symbol? Especially, why should you claim a *more* authentic hold upon the symbol, than they who deny the Lord's second or spiritual advent, and who, therefore, very pertinently cherish his appointed memorials? If your hold upon these ordinances be really more authentic than that of the Episcopalian and Baptist, it can only be because your relation to Christ is more carnal and sensuous than theirs. These ordinances were intended only for the carnal mind, or those who had no rational apprehension of the Divine Truth; and if, therefore, your administration of them exhibit any special fitness, it must lie wholly in your rational inferiority to the older sects.

But the whole pretension is unfounded. A memorial is of value only during the absence of the memorialist. When he returns to us, and exhibits every day and hour the love of his unveiled heart, the memorial grows instantly wan and faded, and falls of necessity into disuse. How sinister a compliment should we seem to pay to his friendship, if we persisted in cherishing a gift after the giver had made himself wholly ours! He would say, "Clearly, the gift has been prized not for my sake purely, but for some private end; otherwise its value would cease by my re-appearance." It was so with the Christian ordinances. Their worth was inestimable during the long spiritual night which invested the Church from the time of the

apostles to the splendid Pentecost of the last century; for they served, as Swedenborg says, to secure an orderly spiritual connection for their subject, and protect him from the incursion of heterogeneous influences. But since that great Pentecost, since the passing away of those old heavens and the formation of new, *and the consequent immediate intercourse of the Lord with man in nature*, to what rational end can these ordinances minister? The truths of the new heaven are internal and universal truths, as intelligible and acceptable to the Turk as to the Englishman; they are rational truths, as applicable, therefore, to the conscience of the Hottentot and Laplander as to the Frenchman or American. Accordingly, the new heavens, as Swedenborg reports them, are made up of Gentiles and Christians alike; and hence mere ecclesiastical Christianity, Christianity which stands in orthodox ritual observances, has utterly lost all celestial validity. A man may be, as to his ecclesiastical merits, a stanch Roman Catholic, or a stanch Presbyterian, or a stanch "New-churchman," and bear every infallible earmark of these several persuasions; but, however various the form of these men, it is evident that their spirit is one, the spirit of separatism or sect, and this spirit must necessarily exclude them all alike from the new heavens. The only spirit which qualifies one for admission to that harmonious company, is the spirit of human brother-

hood or fellowship ; and where this spirit does not exist, the new heavens are not only invisible, they are also incredible. If you doubt this, go and introduce the subject of the new heavens, the heavens to which charity alone gives admission, to the learned attention of any one in whom the ecclesiastical spirit prevails, and you will infallibly "hear things easy to be understood." No doubt sectarians of every complexion will always find false heavens of every name, new and old, suitable to their exact temper ; but the truth of the real heavens is no more prejudiced by the number of spurious ones, than is the worth of bullion prejudiced by the existence of any amount of brass and tinsel.

But I must draw to a close. No observant person can doubt that what is ordinarily called Infidelity is rapidly on the increase in this country, and that it is chiefly fed by the immigration from continental Europe. Religion has been so much identified with the secular power in European countries, the Church has been so potent an authentication of the merely political State, that the popular mind, in reacting against the tyranny of the one, finds itself justly arrayed in equal hostility also to the other. We seem destined to reap some of the fruits of this reaction. Multitudes annually resort to these hospitable shores for a livelihood, who cherish a resolute contempt for the name of religion, and will naturally do all in their

power, legally, to diffuse such contempt. In this state of things, what is the remedy? We have no *political* remedy, of course, since our Constitution allows the utmost freedom of opinion and speech. Indeed, the separation between the civil and ecclesiastical power is our national distinction. It constitutes the legitimate boast of the American church, that it disclaims the alliance of the secular power, or refuses to protect itself by civil penalties. Hence our only reliance against the encroachments of infidelity, must necessarily be in the Divine truth of our religion itself, and the clearer exhibition of its spirit in our own lives. Religion is the affirmation of a higher life for man than that derived from nature—a life of growing conformity to infinite goodness and truth. All good men necessarily therefore enrol themselves on its side, as feeling the very life of their souls bound up with its prosperity. The effect of every conflict, accordingly, between religion and infidelity, must be to bring good men of every name into clearly pronounced union, and reciprocal knowledge and appreciation.

Religious wars are over, doubtless—at least in this land. For where no special ecclesiasticism is tolerated by the State, every possible *casus belli* is averted by anticipation. The only warfare here legitimated is that of opinion, which sheds no blood, and leaves no scars save upon the intolerant, or those who deserve to bear them. A man's

opinions, when they are freely formed, are expressive of his will or his vital attitude towards eternal Goodness. If, accordingly, he cherish an opposite opinion to mine in regard to religion or any other interest, it does not become me to blame him for so doing, but on the contrary, to insist upon his entire freedom in the premises. Blame is called for only when his *action* grows disorderly and hostile to society. The best definition of religion ever given, is that which makes it to consist in loving God supremely and our neighbour as ourselves. I am sure that no man fit for the society of men, can seriously quarrel with religion thus avouched. If he does, it must be at the deliberate compromise of his own character, in confessing himself indifferent to every humane aspiration. Would any one feel disposed to resort to legal penalties against such a person? On the contrary, would not one feel the sincerest pity for him, and cheerfully do his best to soothe and placate him?

Thus, infidelity will not be able to assail religion itself, without infinitely discrediting its own aims. What will it be compelled to do, therefore, by way of keeping itself alive? It will assail certain accidental peculiarities now attaching to the religious *profession*, certain Romish, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Methodist features, nowise belonging to the Divine form itself, yet able, very often, to do her discredit in the eyes of the thoughtless.

An insincere profession, a worldly temper, Pharisaic scrupulosity, superstitious regard for ceremonial observances, unreasonable dogmas, and what not, are sure to shew themselves wherever a sectarian spirit exists, and it is a blessed infidelity which shall help us to correct such abuses. The more you strip religion of its purely ecclesiastical and deciduous features, or, what is the same thing, the more you identify her with true manhood, that is, with the spirit of mutual and universal love which unites the men of all sects together, the more you bring her essential and eternal beauty into relief. When I am assured that my looks are not so captivating as my neighbour's, and my manners not near so graceful as they might be, I then identify myself all the more gladly with the harmless spirit within both looks and manners—a spirit which gives to looks and manners in any case, indeed, all their honest and permanent charm. So, when we convince the ecclesiastic that he has paid too much deference “to the mint, anise, and cummin” interest of religion, he will be sure, out of pure contrition for his folly, to cling all the more resolutely to the weightier interests of judgment and mercy which are its vital self.

Here, then, we discover the remedy against infidelity, and perceive it to consist in the revival of pure and undefiled religion. We shall stop the mouth of the infidel, not by argument, but by exhibiting more and more of the spirit of true religion,

which is that of true humanity, and less and less of the spirit of Romanism, Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, Methodism, and New Churchism. There is no sadder sight to the angels than a *mere* Romanist, or a *mere* Episcopalian, or a *mere* ecclesiastic of any name. One feels how hard it must be for the poor human soul that deliberately buries itself under that rubbish, ever again to reach the upper air, and breathe the heavenly breath of manhood. Every truly religious man in every sect feels alike on this point. Every instructed person perceives that the ecclesiastical temper is especially out of place in this country, because our polity resolutely ignores all ecclesiastical form, committing this subject to the purely private judgment of the people. Hence it is that a man is invariably felt to cut such a sorry figure among us, when he talks loudly about the Church! the Church!—meaning by that word some meagre and arrogant Romanism or Episcopacy or New Churchism, instead of the great brotherhood of those who, under whatever name, cultivate the spirit of Christ—a spirit of perfect love, because of perfect humility.

People of this sort may well dread the advance of infidelity. It is certain to engulf them. It is indeed, directly aimed at their destruction. The man who uses the doctrine of Christ only for the purpose of separating and dividing the great brotherhood of man, belongs in heart to the infidel camp, and will finally enrol his name there. But

to the Christian without guile, to the man who esteems love above knowledge, infidelity presents no terrors. He knows very well that every man of like temper with himself must remain for ever unseduced by its chatter, and that for all others, or for those who exalt knowledge above charity, faith above love, it is of small consequence what name they go by. They will be very sure never to go by an unfashionable one, whether it be Christian or Infidel. How many persons are there in every sect, who are by no means *of* the sect, but who believe substantially in the views here set forth—men who hide their Romanism, and their Episcopacy, and their Methodism, away from the Divine eye as zealously as they would hide any other carnal corruption, and rejoice only in the spirit of mutual love, which is the badge of Christian discipleship!

Is it too much to hope that persons of this stamp in all the sects may be coming into closer reciprocal knowledge, and that ere long they may be brought into open and joyous communion? I think not. But, at all events, I am sure that until that consummation ensue, we shall have no formal *cultus* befitting these high spiritual latitudes, nor any Church consequently which has the least right to be above fear as to what man can do unto it. Man can destroy, and will destroy, every Church which lives by the allegation of a superior Divine sanction to that possessed by other

Churches. On this point, the very citadel and centre of his freedom, man will tolerate nonsense no longer. He will cheerfully promote the welfare of all the sects, because they all express a lawful latitude of human opinion in regard to Divine things, and guarantee the soul consequently against stagnation and death. Their accordant existence, moreover, tends not only to adorn the outward life of the community, by the varied impulse they give the arts, but to develope also its inward life by the constant occasions they afford to the exercise of charity or mutual love. But for this very reason society will no longer tolerate sectarian discords. The harmony of the sects is so full of social advantage, that it would be suicidal in society to permit the slightest infringement of it on any side. In fact, the development of the true or spiritual Church of Christ, is absolutely contingent upon the rigid social equality of the sects. Nor, indeed, is there any likelihood of any of them so far forgetting their own interest, as to attempt transcending this equality, unless it be the Roman Catholic. The Latin poet has said, *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*, and the theory of the Roman Church undoubtedly obliges it to aspire after universal dominion. It is the only Church, except the Mormon, which lays its sacrilegious hand upon *the soul* of its subject, and binds him to its will in this world by claiming an absolute power over the destinies of his cadaver. All the

other Churches claim a strictly *accordant* relation with the State. The Romish Church alone claims a *paramount* relation, and hence it will very well bear to be very well looked after by every one who has the State's welfare at heart. The Pope may doubtless continue to send his swarming legions over, and scatter the trinkets of his official vassalage with a profuse hand; he or his subordinates may timidly begin to test the public tolerance by foolish and aggressive prayers in the public newspapers for the "conversion of the United States" to Popery, or by pompous and puerile ecclesiastical processions in our public thoroughfares, without ruffling the popular indifference one feather. But let them not misconstrue that indifference to the extent of provoking any public recognition of their hierarchical claims. Let them not seek to compass ever so covertly any political ratification of their ecclesiastical supremacy, or their very existence as a Church will be instantly jeopardized. Beaten and prostrate on her own arena, and in the very noontide of her pride and vigour, the Romish Church has doubtless a claim to pass the serene and unperturbed evening of her days in these tolerant climes; but of course so long as she consents, like all her sister sects, to eat the bread of political hospitality merely, and does not claim to be the mistress of the feast. It cannot be necessary in the nature of things to fight the same battle twice over, and it is too en-

tirely ridiculous that this virgin hemisphere should be expected to inherit the quarrels of the older one, or exhibit the slightest solicitude for the lapsed estate of this dowager ecclesiasticism.

After what has gone before, you will not be surprised to hear me say, that I look upon the revival of what may be called "the church sentiment" in these days, as of very precious augury. All that is to be desired in addition is, that the sentiment be somewhat better instructed by means of an enlargement of the popular conception of the Church. One daily meets with tender, humane, and noble persons, who are heart-sick of the miserable scepticism which dogs our current literature and theology, and who would gladly do any thing that should promise to bring back a devout and believing spirit to society. For every person, in fact, who has begun to feel the faintest glimmer of spiritual day-dawn in his soul, knows that without faith in God, human life is devoid of all dignity and charm, and that we shall never begin to grasp the shining ideal which has animated and sustained so many generations, until we attain to a childlike docility of mind in regard to Divine things. The only mistake on the subject is, that many of these persons suppose that the end desired is to be attained by a social retrogression instead of advance, or by reorganizing the old ecclesiasticism instead of utterly abandoning it for a more spiritual conception of the

Church. When the Lord came to fulfil the promise of the earthly Jerusalem, he did not proceed to do so by reorganizing that carnal economy, or infusing new life and sacredness into its crumbling walls, but by turning away the attention of his followers to a new and spiritual house, which should eventually come down from God out of heaven, and gather in its ample bosom all the true flock of the Divine Shepherd. So also, in the resurrection, we do not find that a man is raised in that material body which had been buried, and long since undergone resolution into its component earths and gases, but in a new and spiritual and therefore incorruptible body, befitting his enlarged soul. Accordingly, now while we are looking for a resurrection of the Church, and looking for it too with entire confidence, we have no right whatever to expect it in any formal guise, or as the redintegration of any existing ecclesiastical interests, but only in a spiritual guise, or as that divine spirit of fellowship which is common to all the Churches, and gives to all their solid and sole hold upon public respect. One would gladly realize all the poetic comfort contained in the charming phrase, "*Mother Church*." But surely we do this best, not by degrading the Church into a querulous old maid, for ever looking back to the conquests and coqueties of her youth, and mourning over the joys that are gone, but only by exalting her into "the ever young and ever fair" reality which that

blessed symbol paints. The word "mother" suggests to the imagination all that is most tender, most unselfish, and most uncomplaining, in human nature. The mother forgets herself and her own interests utterly in zeal for the welfare of her children. She finds her best happiness in developing their affections¹ and nascent sensibility, in being totally spent for them, instead of binding them to her service. She is lost in the love of her offspring, and is never unhappy herself so long as their bosoms overflow with contentment. She willingly leaves their moral and intellectual discipline to the father, and is wholly blest in quickening their affections and insuring them that development which most allies them with God. Of course, no possible ecclesiasticism can fulfil the bursting promise of this symbol. It is only the true or spiritual Church, the Church which exists under all ecclesiastical disguises, and becomes visible only in a manly life, that can pretend for a moment to do so. Were the Church utterly divorced in the popular estimation from the ecclesiastical pretension, were it once fairly elevated to the spiritual conception, the days of its true glory would instantly begin, never more to end. Then for the first time we should know the blissful meaning of the phrase "*Mother Church*," because we should then find a mother whose interests were inseparably one with the most various and advanced culture of her offspring, and whose total

spirit, therefore, was one of mutual love and tolerance.

The recent accessions in this country and England to the Romish Church from other communions, do not indicate, as is sometimes foolishly said, any revival of vigour within that Church. They simply indicate a fastidious individual reaction here and there against the spirit of the age, a spirit which is daily leaving that Church higher and dryer upon the sands of popular neglect, and exposing it to the inevitable fate that awaits all purely parasitic life. The Catholic Church exists now in the condition of a mere *scabies* upon the life of the nations, or the body politic, and can no more become again incorporate with that life, than a *scabies* thrown off from the natural body can again become incorporate with it. The homage it receives from individuals here and there in other communions, is no doubt soothing to its pride; but this homage communicates no strength to it, being expressive in fact only of utter weakness on the part of the giver, or utter inability to keep pace with the inflowing life of God into the nations. Suppose all the imbecile and recusant life of Christendom should take refuge in the Romish communion, as it very probably may, would that church be any the stronger, or only the weaker for the infusion? The larger the army, if cowardice and poltroonery be its spirit, the surer its overthrow. There is nothing strong but innocence,

which is love, and love does not vaunt itself, does not puff itself up, does not behave itself unseemly, nor prompt its subject to thrust himself upon a public which is tired of him. When one is no longer of use but to oneself, he had better die and be forgotten, as every homage he receives after that event, being offered to the memory of his old renown, is inwardly a present rebuke. Had Louis Philippe, bearing his shabby griefs, come over to this country after his fall from power, he would have received from the individual courtesy of our people the most lavish personal consideration. They would have dined him and supped him, and caressed and flattered him out of all measure: they would have felt, indeed, a cordial sympathy with his heavy losses, and many individuals, no doubt, would have avowed a sharp and bitter disgust at the upstart influences which overthrew him. But would Louis Philippe, think you, have been senseless enough to imagine that all this patronage of his fallen majesty *promised to reinstate him*? I fancy not. A king in rags is a splendid bait for a luxurious benevolence, and a man of Louis Philippe's knowledge of the world would have understood the case at a glance. Let the Romish Church take a lesson from the illustration. It is seldom so splendid a mendicant knocks at the door of our ecclesiastic sympathies, and the scarlet and queenly memories she trails in the dust furnish an irresistible lure to our sensuous

pity. But for this very reason she is apt to get herself patronized by the least instructed and most wilful tempers in Protestantism, mere wanton Quixotes, who, in their zeal for reaction, would place man's eyes in the back of his head, and who look upon windmills, and good honest mutton, and all the other insignia of man's progressive industry, as inventions of the devil to rob the past of its glory. Can this sort of patronage be anything else than degrading to its object? In fact, does not all patronage imply that its object is below its subject? But this is a digression.—

No, the American Church, the only church which is at all congruous with the genius of our polity, is not a new ecclesiastical form, but a new spirit breathed, if they will allow, into the old forms. It can have no *formal* quarrel, of course, with the old churches, because these formal ecclesiastical differences are exactly commensurate with the needs of its own spiritual unity. It has no purely formal interests of its own, because, being exclusively a spiritual economy, and therefore identical with the sentiment of universal love or fellowship in the soul of man, it equally authenticates every form, Pagan and Christian, Jewish and Mohammedan, which admits of this spirit in its votary. Every nation must possess a church, or a spiritual substance into which the life of heaven may flow; because it is evident that the merely political life of the nations is subordinate to an interior or

higher life,—is in fact but the carnal covering or clothing of that life, and hence disclaims all *immediate* contiguity with the Divine. But if every nation must have a Church or spiritual substance, as every body must have a soul, it follows also that this Church or spiritual substance must be fully commensurate with its political form. Thus the Church in these United States must disown every organization which falls short of our political proportions. Its doors must be, at the very least, as wide as the doors of our political house; otherwise we shall exhibit the disreputable picture of a body larger than its soul, or a Church less celestial than its corresponding State. As our political dimensions make us a city of refuge for all the materially oppressed of the earth, so our ecclesiastical dimensions must make us a city of refuge for all the spiritually oppressed. Politically we overlook the native differences of our refugees, absorbing them all alike into our own higher nationality. And of course, therefore, ecclesiastically we can shew no partiality, nor recognize any of the existing Churches as authentic, but must elevate them all alike to a higher spiritual level or unity.

Thus we shall at last hail the introduction of a new and eternal morality. The present ecclesiastical morality, were there any life remaining in it, would be sheerly detestable. The Catholic, the Presbyterian, the Jew, the New-Churchman, the Baptist, the Mohammedan, the Mormon, fancies

that no one is secure of the Divine complacency out of the pale of his own creed, and expects, accordingly, a heaven which shall inspire harps of only one string. In so far as this man is a consistent or strict ecclesiastic, he necessarily regards all men as good who belong to his own communion, and all men as evil who reject it. For, of course, no one supposes that God saves any but good men, or condemns any but bad ones. It is very true that few ecclesiastics are logical enough to go to this unhandsome extreme, for, as I said before, the old ecclesiastic morality is nearly lifeless, exhibiting only an occasional expiring flicker in some heartless theologic adventurer, or mere odious residuum of ignorance and insolence in the shape of certain Catholic newspapers. But this unhandsome extreme is nevertheless logically inherent in the very heart of the sectarian theory. The consistent Catholic, or the consistent New-Churchman, necessarily supposes every one liable to the Divine wrath, who intelligently refuses to become identified with their ecclesiastical interests; otherwise they would deny to those interests all Divine sanction. And hence, as I said before, inasmuch as no one can suppose God to approve any but good men, or condemn any but bad ones, the consistent ecclesiastic or man of the past Church, whatever name he assumes, makes the distinction of good and evil to attach to men only

as they stand related, positively or negatively, to his own pigmy pretensions.

The true or spiritual Church pronounces this morality untenable, and affirms the distinction of good and evil henceforth among men, not as they stand related to any ecclesiasticism under heaven, but only as they stand related to the Spirit of God, the spirit of human love or fellowship. A man shall have whatsoever ecclesiastical ties he pleases: he may be Catholic or Protestant, Christian or Mohammedan, and call himself after the Old or the New Jerusalem, as suits his fancy; and no one spiritually enlightened will deem him so far either good or evil. For he who is spiritually enlightened, he who is of the Lord's new and living Church, knows that no good or evil is predicable in the Divine sight, save of the presence or absence of love in the soul. He who loves his neighbour as he loves himself, is a good man in God's sight, whether he be Turk or Christian ecclesiastically, and will go, as fast as his expansive lungs permit, to the heaven of good men. He who loves himself more than he loves his neighbour, is a bad man in God's sight, whether he be dubbed ecclesiastically Pope or Rabbi, and unless he repent, will infallibly bring up in the heaven of bad men.

Such is the temper and such the eternal morality of the true spiritual Church, the only Church which possesses political basis and ratification in

these United States. Our political constitution excludes all purely formal Churches, every Church that is visibly different from others, from its recognition, and so authenticates only an inward Church, or a Church which stands in the widest spirit of human fellowship, and which may exist, therefore, under the most opposite ecclesiastical forms. The vegetable or animal spirit of the world expresses itself in very various shapes, here in the shape of a cabbage, and there in the shape of a peach; here in the form of a donkey, and there in the form of a horse. But the spirit is one under all these varied manifestations, namely, a spirit of love and accommodation to all man's varied material uses. So the religious spirit in humanity may beget here a Papacy, and there a Presbytery, or an Episcopacy, without any necessary compromise of its own unity. It is a spirit of love and accommodation to all man's varied intellectual uses, and hence not only tolerates but exacts every various and even eccentric formal manifestation. He who quarrels with this largeness of the world's spiritual administration, he who would have its religious Providence authenticate only some special form, some narrow Rome or narrower Jerusalem, must at some period or other of his spiritual pilgrimage, quarrel with nature's largeness also, and find his diet made up perhaps of unmitigated cabbage, and his empire restricted to unmitigated donkey. Who can tell to what

smallness one may decline, that obstinately renders himself insubmissive to the Divine Providence which governs the world? Nature is but the servant of the soul, and will not always transcend the soul's demands in the services she renders.

It is at once the splendid distinction and the safety of our own nation that it is utterly devoid of ecclesiastical pretension. It does not profess any divine sanctity but that which is derived from its conformity to the interests of mankind at large, and consequently it steers clear of any collision with the higher powers. When a man seeks nothing more than to obey the laws of his nature, and refrains from the attempt to obstruct others in the same pursuit, it would be a very unrighteous step in any power to put an impediment in his path. It were good, of course, to enlighten his ignorance and sharpen his perspicacity in the science of life ; but to weaken his exertions and embarrass his success could only be the work of a busy body. And so it is with a nation in like condition. If a nation will strictly aim to develop its own resources, or reap all the legitimate blessing which lies in the evolution of the fullest life of its members, without damage or contempt toward other people, then God can have no proper quarrel with that nation, can have nothing but boundless good-will toward them. They do not profess to serve Him in any exemplary or illustrative manner ; and any errors they may exhibit, therefore, reflect no discredit upon His

name, and do not invite His vindictive judgments. They are simply fulfilling, in the best way known to them, the laws of the nature He has given them, and their ignorance and insufficiency accordingly, instead of being a lawful reproach to either party, are simply a most powerful appeal to His sympathy and friendship. We cannot, therefore, in this country be too jealous of the *public* encroachments of a Jewish temper. Our very existence depends upon the exclusion of religion as an element of government; and we should become a most righteous mockery to all mankind if, in face of the open page of history, we should yet allow the foul itch of ecclesiastical ambition to corrupt our present political innocence.

These States, whether you regard them federatively or individually, wholly disown any ecclesiastical ends, or admit no obligation superior to the will of the whole people, very justly supposing that the will of the whole people, in so far as it goes, cannot greatly differ from the will of God. There has never been an unrighteous *people* in history, though there has been many an unrighteous *government*. We never find God quarrelling with mankind, but only with some vicious and imperfect administration of its interests. You may ask me whether God did not quarrel with the Jewish people? Unquestionably he did, and you will immediately perceive how the illustration confirms my observation. For notoriously, *the Jewish people*

arrogated to itself the government of the world, and claimed God's express and repeated appointment to that high charge. In the Jewish economy no class distinction, except those made by service or function, existed, but the entire nation was holy. They were a peculiar people, setting themselves apart from the rest of mankind and impudently claiming its allegiance. Thus the Jewish people stood in a governmental or administrative attitude toward mankind at large, and *it was purely on behalf of the interests of mankind at large, that God is represented as dashing it down from its unparalleled eminence.* This we see from the truth of my observation visibly demonstrated in this splendid historic *tableau*. The Jew claimed to be the divinely avouched ruler of mankind; and as such accordingly he has been made to stand a perpetual monument of the Divine indignation, and a fearful warning to all imitative despotisms. For it is strictly incompatible with the Divine perfection that any nation or any man should claim a *peculiar* nearness to God, or a *priority* in His regard, without manifest unrighteousness. For, as God is one and His creation one, he who would sow disunion between himself and his fellows becomes at once the enemy of God and man, and is bound sooner or later to eat the dust of retributive scorn. All history is pregnant with the stupendous doctrine. Christian Europe is now in its turn tremblingly laying the lesson to heart, even as Greece

and Rome, Egypt and Judea, have laid it previously to theirs. And every nation will go on to learn it in the ashes of utter and permanent desolation, which does not betimes manfully disown ecclesiastical pride, and cheerfully disavow every priesthood short of universal humanity.

Thus the new Church, the Church of these American latitudes, is as it were a spiritual Ark, rising high above the waters of oblivion which are fast covering the ecclesiastical eminences of the old world, and opening its hospitable doors to every element which can add life and vigor and beauty to the manhood of a regenerate era. It legitimates every existing ecclesiastical form which the sentiment of human fellowship or equality legitimates; that is to say, every form which is compatible with the existence of brotherly love in its subject, and so elevates the religious life to a higher platform than it has yet known. Thus far, then, in all outward respects, our ecclesiastical development amounts to a disorganization or solution of the things that have gone before: what our subsequent crystallization will be as to the mere forms of worship, I am neither able nor interested to predict. Of one thing I am profoundly and joyously certain, namely, that the glory of God's former house will be utterly eclipsed in the more spiritual splendour of that which is coming. This will be true, doubtless, even of its sensuous things, or its programme of public worship. Its divine spirit will breathe new

sacredness and sweetness even into the established ritual, and new forms vivid with the beauty of charity will be begotten adequate to every new want. But the distinctive fact of the Church is not an improved Sunday worship, or a new holiday apparatus, but exclusively an improved daily life. The saint of the new Church will not be the man who prays the most, and builds the most hospitals and churches, and undergoes the most self-sacrifice of whatever kind; for eminence in these things is almost sure to beget pride, or a sense of superior merit, in the votary: but the man who cheerfully abounds in social uses, who diligently pursues his lawful calling, who trains his children to noble and patient labours, who dodges no juries and shirks no political responsibility, but manfully confronts every duty, aspiring with his whole heart to be worthy of the great and beautiful society in which God has placed him. The most vernacular and intelligible expression for God's own perfection is *USE*, and the divinest form of man, consequently, is that which he derives, not from his father and mother, for this does not endure, but from his own frank and cordial and complete adjustment of himself to the various uses, which society devolves upon him. This is man's spiritual form, and it endures to all eternity, growing evermore instinct with God's own power, and this is the form to which alone the true Church has respect in man.

The new Church life, therefore, will begin *from* God as well as tend *to* God. Under the old and typical creation represented by Moses, religion was not life, but a something superinduced upon life; it was a solace under trial, a refreshment after toil, and stood embodied in Sabbatical observances. The Sabbath, or day of divine rest, ended the week, shedding the dews of its consolation upon the heads and hearts which the previous six days' toil had bruised and wearied. But the new and true creation in Christ Jesus reverses this process. It identifies religion with life, inspiring man to labour, not with any hope of winning the Divine favour, but with the confidence of its present and inalienable possession. Hence Christianity discards the Sabbath, or day of refreshment *after* six previous days of toil, and substitutes the *first* day of the week as the Lord's day; thus signifying that under the new and final economy man will work no longer to life but only from it, no longer with a servile but only with a filial spirit, or that all his secular activity is henceforth to be baptized with the temper and blessing of heaven.

I remain,

Yours, etc., etc.

APPENDIX.

A. Page 59.

FOR the purpose of ampler illustration, the reader will permit me to quote the following passage from an Essay now out of print, on *The Nature of Evil*.

“There is no such *entity* or *thing* as human nature. Human nature is a purely abstract term by which we mean to express whatsoever is common to man, and whatsoever therefore separates him from other existence. In its theologic applications, the term is used to express nothing more and nothing less than what man is in *himself*, and apart from divine influence. It expresses what man is *in se*, in a state of *uncreation* so to speak, or before he is created in the divine image; and hence to regard it as a something created by God *additional* to man himself, and dominating him, is to sink the truth in endless confusion, and virtually to vacate human accountability. The word expresses the undivine side of man, the finite side, or the aspect he exhibits when he averts himself from the divine influence, and declines the elevation it offers him. In the largest application of the term Nature, it has a precisely analogous force. For *nature* in its largest sense signifies the universal community of things, the community of existing things, or whatsoever all things possess in common. It does not mean history, civilization, culture; it does not mean the differences which art engenders in the community of existing things; it simply means that community itself. And in its more limited applications, this sense is preserved; as for example when we say “the nature of a horse,” “the nature of a rose.” Here the word expresses whatsoever is common to all

horses, and all roses. Both the horse and the rose by culture and the operation of local or special causes, may be very variously developed, but the common nature of the horse or the rose remains unaffected by all these modifications. The Shetland pony is as genuine a horse, or as true a partaker of the horse-nature, as the English cart-horse, or the Arabian courser; and the Harrison rose is as true a rose or as genuine a partaker of the rose-nature, as if its color were ruby red. Thus the nature of the horse includes or accounts for all those facts of structure and function which are the same in—or common to—all horses, whatever individual differences may subsequently be engrafted by art or training on that nature. And so of the rose.

“Thus nature refuses to account for individuality, and asserts only identity or community. It asserts what the horse or the rose is *in se*, and abstractly from the operation of local or special causes. If you should find any thing upon the earth so individual, or so distinct from all other things, as that you could discern no community between it and them, you would immediately pronounce it a *super-natural* phenomenon. Whenever you chance to meet with any thing bearing slight analogies of structure or function with other things, you pronounce it “an uncommon or remarkable thing,” as feeling at a loss to account for it on natural or common principles. Thus if Mr. Barnum should somewhere turn you up a violet colored horse, or a pig with a silken fleece, the marked individuality of the phenomenon would demand for its explanation some fact additional to that of the animal’s nature. You would say that the nature of the horse or the pig in developing these monstrous forms or individualities, had obeyed some foreign and superior influence. In brief then, nature means community, means to express whatsoever its subjects possess in common, or what they are in themselves apart from foreign influence. It does not imply any visible tangible *entity* or thing, apart from the subject of which it is predicated, but only what that subject is *in se*, and apart from foreign interference.

“In consonance with this use of the word nature, we mean when we speak of man’s nature, or of human nature, to signify whatsoever things all men possess in common, whatsoever they are in themselves and apart from any foreign or superior influence. One man is tall or short as belonging to a particular family, one is learned or foolish as possessing or lacking a special culture, one is blond or brown as belonging to a certain race, but the common nature is unaffected by all these specific varieties, being precisely the same in the tall man as in the short, in the learned as in the ignorant, in the blond as in the brown. We indeed often say that one man’s nature differs from another’s, but our language does not exactly reflect our meaning in these cases. We do not mean to say as our language would imply, that the men in question do not possess a common nature, or are not quite equally men; we mean simply to say, that they possess a different natural temperament or disposition. One of them is *naturally* amiable and gentle, the other morose and turbulent; that is to say, these differences of disposition signalize themselves from infancy, and previously to all culture. But these differences are attributable not to a difference in the nature of the subjects, but only to the difference of their specific parentage, near or remote. The specific ancestral traits of either diversify their common nature, but do not impair it, so that either has a precisely equal claim with the other to the name and consideration of man.”

B. Page 110.

HENRY C. CAREY has demonstrated that the vicious element in Political Economy is *value*, and that the unswerving tendency of civilization is to eliminate this element, or to depreciate its operation. Mr. Carey has made the discovery, the most pregnant one it appears to me, ever made in political science, that a constant law operates in history, the effect of which is to equalize the extremes of human society, by giving to capital a steadily *diminish-*

ing ratio of remuneration, and to labor a steadily *increasing* ratio. The sign and measure of the operation of this law, is the decline in the element of value. For value attaches only to capital, or the products of human industry. The value of a thing is never its utility, else water would be more valuable than gold; but the pains it costs to produce it. And as nothing is produced which is not capital, so accordingly value is always a sign of capital.

Now values are continually declining. Clothing, lodging, and food, all of an improved sort, too, are cheaper than they were a hundred years ago; that is to say, a vastly greater number of men and women are well fed, well clad, and well lodged now than at any previous period of the world's history; and the reason of this fact is, that food, clothing, and shelter, are now *cheaper* or that *these values are declining*. But why are they declining? Why is it that food, clothing, and shelter, are cheaper now than they were in the days of Julius Cæsar, or Henry VIII., or the first George? It is solely because of improved facilities of production; or, to state the grand fact more fully, because *nature's co-operation* in production is perpetually advancing, while man's, to an equal extent, ceases. Nature charges us nothing for her bounties. She gives us her water, her steam, her heat, her winds, her magnetism, her electricity, not only at no cost to ourselves, but in actually discharging at the same time the innumerable hands which otherwise had been absorbed in the most servile labours. The constant tendency of improvements in the machinery of production, or what is the same thing, the constant effect of nature's advancing co-operation with man, is to restore man to himself, to afford him leisure and means to cultivate the higher parts of his nature and become the good and wise creature which God has destined him to be.

I wish very much that our young men would read Mr. Carey's books, which for the first time make Political Economy humane and religious; or Frederic Bastiat's *Harmonies Economiques*: for then I am sure that the intellect of the country would gather new vigor, and its

heart swell with new hope towards God. For if it be true, as Carey and Bastiat prove, that man is becoming, by nature's advancing co-operation, gradually emancipated from the dominion of the material sphere, it is quite certain that some superior life is dawning in him. Man never becomes unclothed, save by being clothed upon. That is to say, he never dies to one thing except by living to another. If, therefore, he is becoming freed from the tyranny of natural want; if, as these writers shew, nature is incessantly growing subject to man, it must be that man himself is becoming the subject of a higher life. For nature does not *serve* those who are subject to her. She *rules* them on the contrary with an iron strictness. Witness all the vegetable and animal tribes. She serves only the subjects of a higher power. Now Carey and Bastiat do not mean to say that men are growing more religious in the technical sense of that word. It is no doubt blessedly true, now as always, that individual men are inwardly expanding to the solicitations of an infinite goodness and truth; but this is not the fact to which these writers refer. They are signalizing a common or general fact, not an individual one. They do not mean to say that this, that, or the other special person is becoming emancipated from physical vassalage, for this has always been true; but that all men, or the whole body of the community, are undergoing this emancipation. They affirm that the common or associated life of man is advancing into higher conditions, and they prove the fact by alleging the increasing alacrity of nature's service.

FINIS.

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